AUSTRALIAN

PLAYBOY

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DECEMBER 1981-$2.50*

MATESHIP: What's it worth?

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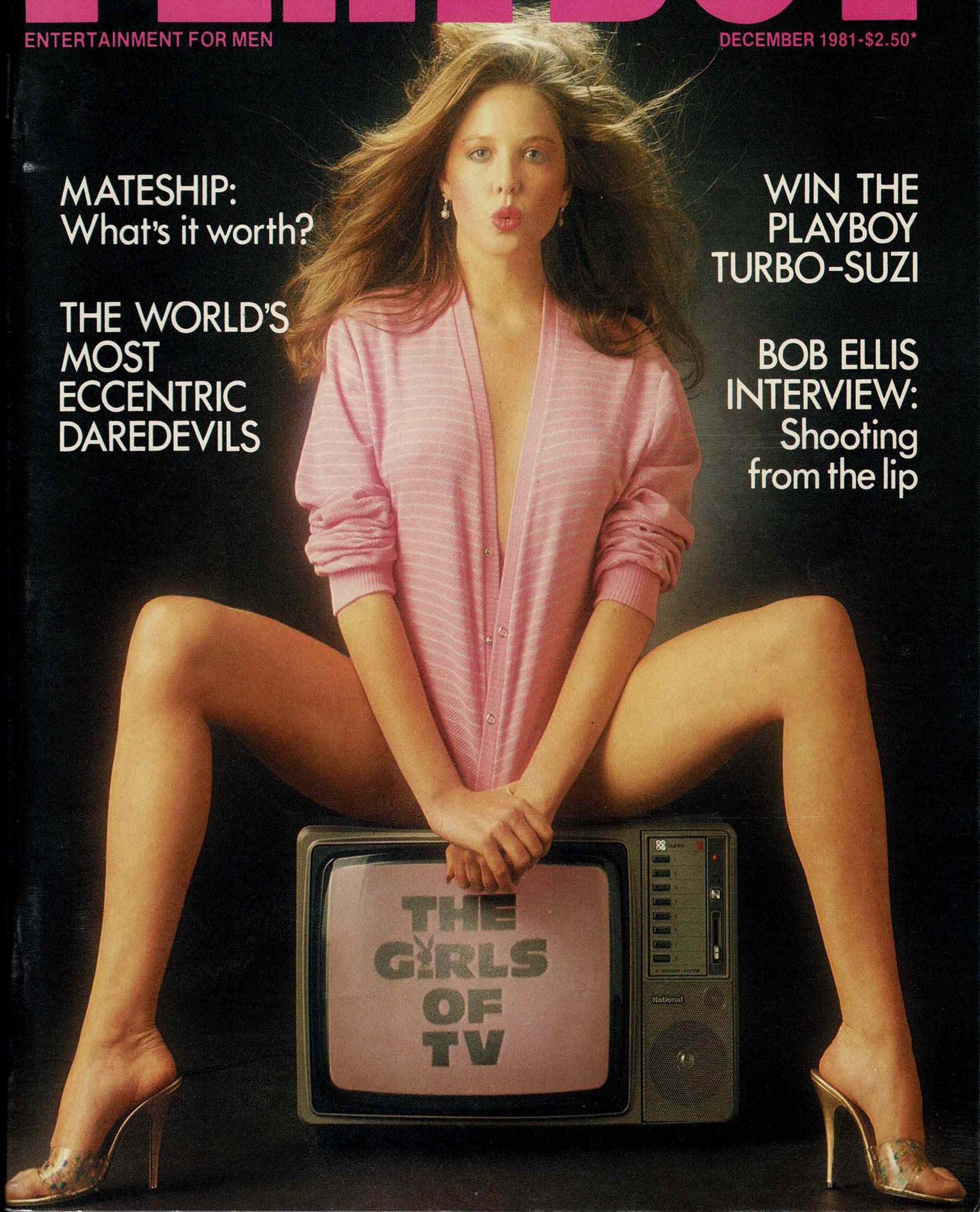
BOB ELLIS INTERVIEW: Shooting from the lip



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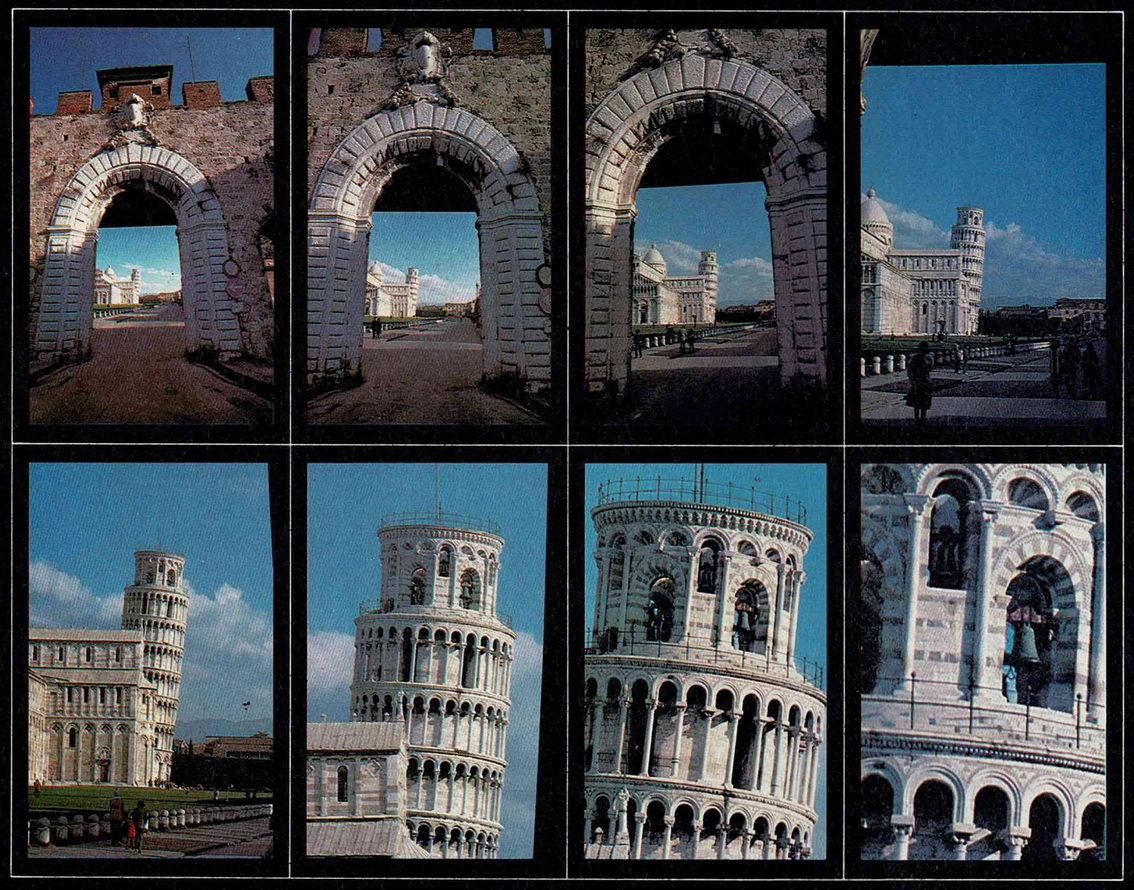

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PLAYBILL

BESET ON all sides by trendy commentators railing against the "myth of mateship", we decided to ask staff writer **Neil Jameson** to take a long, close look at this venerable Australian institution. Naturally, he discussed the issue over a few cold tinnies with his old chinas and decided they'd do him. What's more, he found a few hidden benefits under the Old Mates Act that might surprise you. The **John O'Gready** photograph illustrating the piece is an Australian classic . . . and enough to put paid to even the most vocal of critics of the grand old Oz tradition of mateship.

The ritual of mateship takes many forms as **Geoffrey Tabin** found when he joined the Oxford Dangerous Sports Club — a select band of eccentric idle Poms who undertake bizarre adventures for the hell of it. Somehow, he lived to tell the tale.

We stretch the friendship a bit by inviting a famous Pommy cricket writer to give his views on today's Australia. But, **Ian Wooldridge,** after seven visits to these shores has seen the light — or has he? **Tony Rafty** did the illustration. **John Benaud** steps in to even the score with a searching look at our cricketing future. It's not a promising scenario, but he offers sound advice. **Keith Davis** masterminded the graphics.

Things brighten up considerably however with the introduction of lithe Amanda Dole, a true child of the tropical sun. Amanda was photographed for this issue's centrefold by **Colin Stead.** He chose exotic Fitzroy Island, near Cairns, for its natural beauty — a perfect frame for our blonde beauty.

And for those of us who happen to prefer brunettes, photographer **Jeff Dunas** focused on the sultry Chloe — a lovely lady who loves pretending that she's a black panther contemplating her next conquest.

Tony Lintermans takes us on a surfing saga in a fine piece of fiction, 5.45 to Nirvana. His hero meets an unlikely ghost from the past, and traps the reader in an unusual ending. **Hugh Edwards** captures the surreal mood in his astonishingly terrifying photograph.

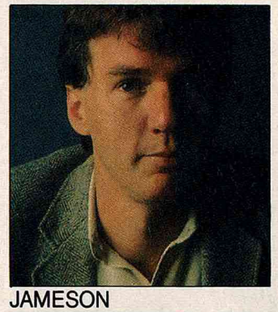
David Witt then takes us on a hilarious look at another sort of ending — celibacy. He gets down to basics in fine style, and introduces some novel twists in the eternal quest — including fourplay and aural sex!

Keeping up the laughs is writer **Richard Beckett** with an hilarious story about a notorious blue heeler who let the side down. **Alan Ewart's** illustration captures our doggone hero in fine detail.

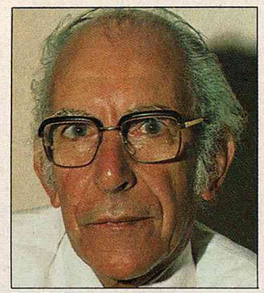
Cartoonist **Michael Lodge** and regular fiction writer **John Byrell** lighten the mood with a nostalgic folktale about a particular Melbourne Cup, and a meeting between Big Oscar and Lady Di.

Meanwhile, **Denis Whitburn** talks with Bob Ellis for our Playboy interview. It's compulsive reading. Ellis withholds nothing as he discourses widely — and wildly — on the theatre, his women, other people's women, women, and the ripe old days of ferret journalism and the young *Nation Review.* Playwright, arts columnist and self-appointed conscience of the Australian film industry, Ellis is definitely not without his critics. But, equally, the man is never boring. As Whitburn says: "There is an Australian air about the man I find unique. He is at once a scruffy, mug lair and precise thinker . . ."

Of course, there's motoring from **Rob Luck,** jump-for-joy-like fashion from **Kate Stead,** more Money and Sexual Stars . . . and, last but certainly not least, everything you ever wanted to know about your favorite girls on the boob tube in our fantastic TV pictorial. Happy viewing!



JAMESON



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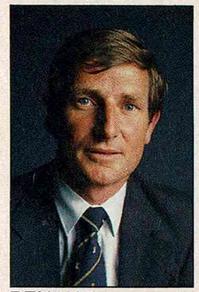

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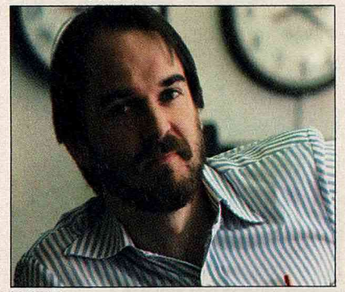

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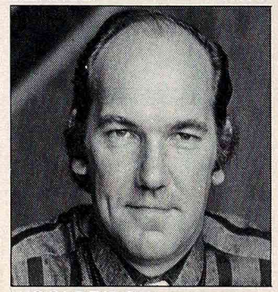

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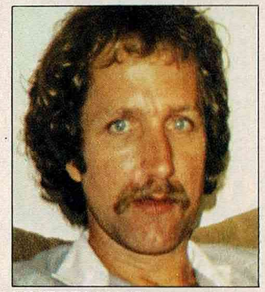

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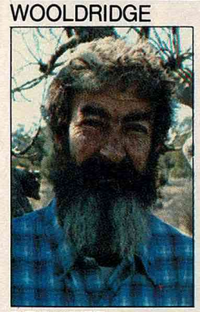

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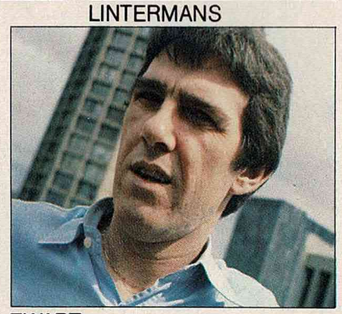

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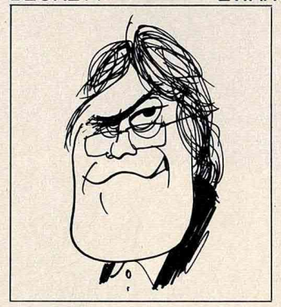

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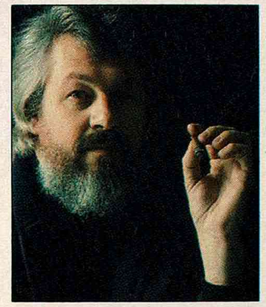

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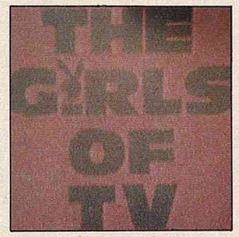

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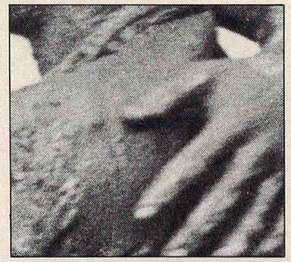
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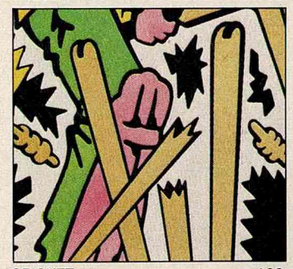
CRICKET 120

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DEAR PLAYBOY

ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO DEAR PLAYBOY, BOX 4088, GPO, SYDNEY 2001

BEAUTIFUL BO

I guess I'm one of the silent minority, but I've got to say it: maybe it's time that Bo Derek was put out to pasture.

Sure, she is beautiful, so are some statues. Sure, she's got a sexy body. So have the Girls of the Gold Coast (PLAYBOY, August) and Elizabeth Chapman (September). However they also have another quality: reality. Bo is like a clock that has to be wound up all the time. I guess John Derek does the winding-up.

It's time, I think, that both Derek and his doll-like creation gave us a rest.

T.McI.,
Brisbane, Qld.

TARZAN WHO?

It was great to see your pictorial on Bo Derek. She was born to play a character like Tarzan's Jane. There hasn't been an actress with her sex appeal since the early '60s when Ann-Margret and Raquel Welch hit the scene. And Bo is better than they were at their top.

Her movie, *10,* is one of my all time favorites, and I'd like to see it again. So, could I use your columns to ask the film distributors to revive that movie? It is well worth another viewing.

Oh yes, I'll be going to see *Tarzan.* And as for which actor plays the ape man, who cares?

J.M.,
Hobart, Tas.

SIMPLY FANTASTIC

I thought your section on Bo Derek was, to say the least, simply fantastic. I have been reading PLAYBOY ever since it came out, and I have loved every girl you have put in your delightful pages of this terrific magazine. Many thanks to your great photographers, and everyone else, who helps put this beautiful magazine together. Keep up the good work, people.

Can I just have one more peek at that very gorgeous Bo Derek?

P.C.,
Essendon, Vic.

See "Movies" for more — Ed.

RIDE 'EM COWBOY

Just when I was wondering when you guys would finally get back to the bush, PLAYBOY appears with a story on Australian rodeo. Jill Bowen is dead right — the sport makes for great television, so stick with it. What an exciting change it would make among all that football and cricket.

W.McLean,
Maitland, NSW.

THE SICKIE

I loved your humor piece, The Sickie (PLAYBOY, August) by Lee Patterson. It was a great read and full of good clean fun.

However, Patterson only hinted at a point which should be brought further to the fore: sickies are not just for the pastime of the employee-type of Australians. We are, after all, one nation and the boss enjoys his days off the air too. Waiting for that vital decision to come while the boss is exorcising his tensions on the golf course can easily drive one to be, well, sick.

J. Peters,
Adelaide, SA.

AUSSIE BIRDS

It was pleasing to see an Adelaide girl featured in Girls of the Gold Coast in your August edition. We have many more of that same high standard here. This would without doubt apply Australia wide, which is what really upsets me.

From the early 1960s I was a subscriber to American PLAYBOY until your first edition of Australian PLAYBOY hit the stands. Here was the same high quality magazine, with a beautiful fresh Australian girl as its centrefold. I was won over.

Australia has some of the most beautiful women in the world . . . let's have more of them on our centrefolds.

T.A. — 0069,
Adelaide, SA.

So far this year, Australian girls have been the centrefolds in the February, April, May, June, September and October issues. There will be more. — Ed.

SPARE PARTS

The manufacturers have only themselves to blame for the high price of car spares. How long is it since you saw a bulb for a headlight, for example? Today, you have to buy an entire headlight assembly simply because a bulb goes. And the same applies to almost every component. They all now come in packages. Good on Rob Luck for his exposé.

M.L.T.,
Rosebery, NSW.

BODY BEAUTIFUL

I'm sorry to hear that Ronald Conway (PLAYBOY Pipeline, August) met the undesirables in body-building, but I suppose they are around in every sport. Also, I think Mr Conway gave your readers the impression that the majority of weight-trainers aren't as strong as weight-lifters and this, of course, is nonsense.

A.W.,
Hobart, Tas.

KO PUNCH

Congratulations on obtaining the services of that noted English humorist and editor of Punch, Alan Coren. The two pieces of his that you have so far published, Base Camp, in August, and the October article about Australia were delightful.

But I must admit to some reservations about the second piece; it sure requires a thick skin and a sustained sense of humor to continue to see the funny side of this "knock". However, a gentle touch of fun at our expense might knock a bit of steam out of some of our more verbose national promoters.

L.J.T.,
Sans Souci, NSW.

SHATTERED

Well, PLAYBOY, you have certainly outstripped your competition. I thought I had found my perfect woman between the pages of a competitor of yours, but pages 54 to 61 of your July issue put paid to that idea.

Brigitte Richter is one earthquake I would travel miles to be part of. If Bo Derek was a "10", Brigitte must be at least a "20".

One complaint, though: why didn't Miss Richter make July Playmate? As Jack B would say, it's like chalk & cheese firmer holding & better profile.

R. Robbie,
Bombala, NSW.

PLAYBOY welcomes all correspondence. However, we can only publish letters which contain the full name and address of the writer, plus a phone number where possible.

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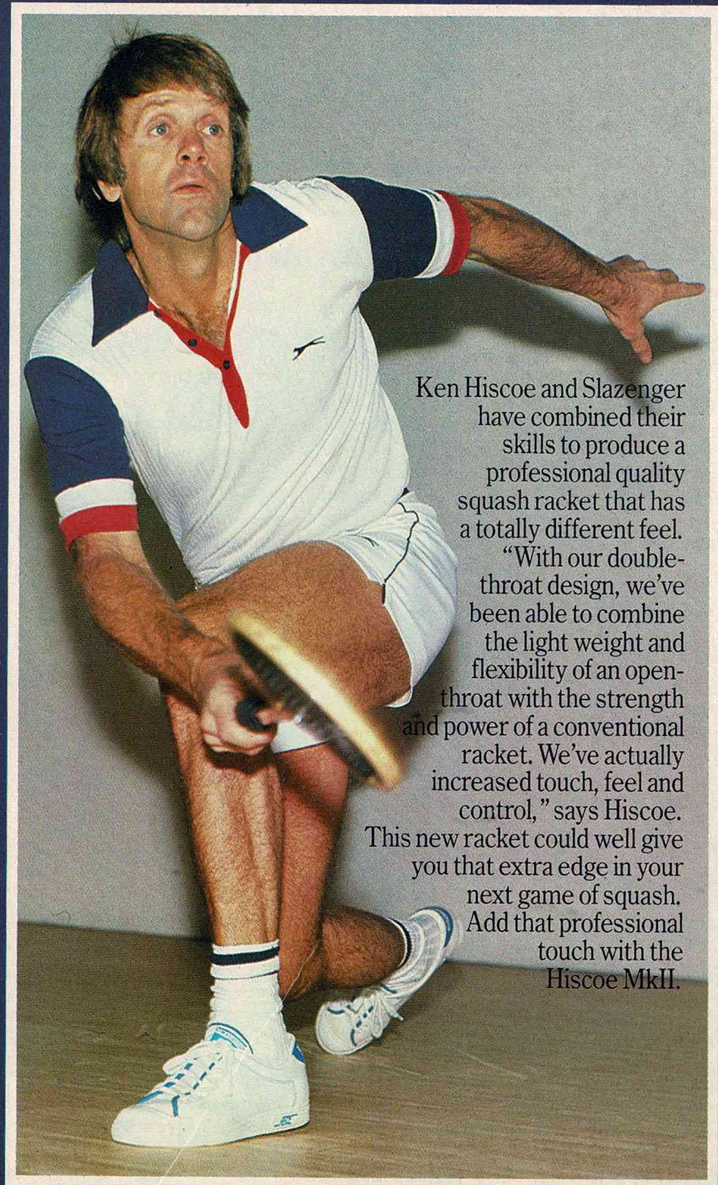

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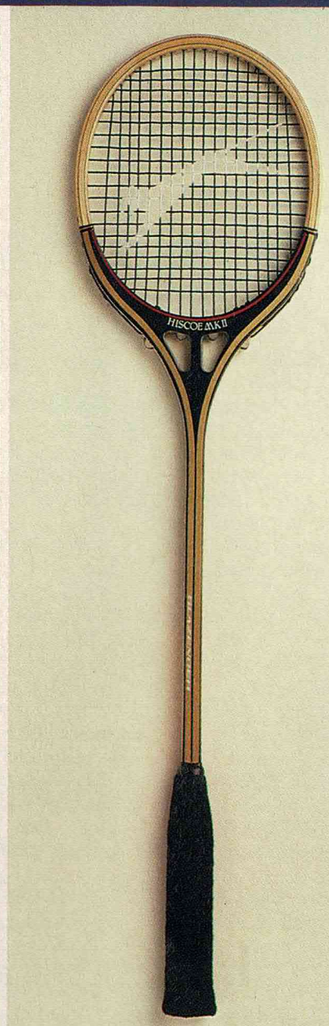


Hiscoe Mk II

SLAZENGER

THE WINNING FEELING

894.P.181

PLAYBOY AFTER HOURS

MOVE OVER

Western Australia, that big, brash, sunburnt third of the continent, where gals still outnumber guys and there are more traffic cops to the square mile than anywhere else in the world, likes officially to be known as "the State of Excitement".

But before it became "exciting", WA was "the State on the Move", which is probably the motive behind the latest postcard being sold in the West for sending to less fortunate friends and relations in what they call the "Eastern States". This "authentic map of WA and its dependencies" (a reference that would undoubtedly satisfy Sir Charles Court), shows a grossly distorted map of Australia which implies that the Sandgropers have the best of everything (beaches, yachtsmen, goldmines, gemstones, wildflowers, etc) while the other States have nothing but sharks, rain, and for some peculiar reason, jellyfish.

Canberra is dismissed as "WA's hot air supply", NSW as "WA's waste disposal", Victoria as "WA's cold storage", and Tasmania as "WA's apple farm". We suppose it's all designed as a bit of a giggle for Aunt Maude back in the wicked East.

But it's also a bit of a giggle when you read the fine print — the all-conquering State of Excitement has had its postcards printed in Gympie, Queensland.

THAT'S DEAD RIGHT

A colleague just back from Hong Kong reports an unusual find in a newspaper wrapped around a pair of carved snuff bottles he bought in one of the island's many antique shops. Glancing through the shipping notes in the *South China Morning Post*, he was amused to read this:

"The British *MV Fortune Wind* (Captain Starboard Woo), Continental Navigation, arrived from Dairen with 2823 tons of general cargo in transit."

Intrigued, he made a few inquiries in the Foreign Correspondents' Club, where he found that during the late '60s, Continental Navigation had two captains named Woo, and in true nautical fashion, distinguished between the pair by dubbing them Port and Starboard.

THAT'S PANACHE

If you've ever wondered about the real meaning of panache, how's this? A divorcee of our acquaintance has spent the past couple of years sharing her Sydney pad with a former Adelaide photographer, to all intents and purposes a single guy. From the outside looking in, it seemed the perfect match, and our lady friend fancied she could hear the sound of bells in the distance, and even the patter of tiny feet.

But the best laid plans of mice and men (and divorcees), etc. Out of the blue, live-in lover calmly announced he was hot-footing it back to the city of churches — and his wife and two rug rats. He was sorry, he said, but them's the breaks, and it had been fun while it lasted. Our lady friend took it all equally calmly; not a tantrum, not a recrimination. Quite the opposite, in fact. While he went off to say goodbye to the boys at the local boozer, she offered to pack his clobber, including the shirt she gave him for Christmas, and the jumper she knitted for his birthday. She even drove him out to the airport.

The only thing worrying our lady friend now is how lover boy explained to wifey in Adelaide how every stitch of clothing he possessed came to be cut into neat two-inch strips — including the shirt he got for Christmas and the jumper knitted specially for his birthday.

Yes, our lady friend has a lot of panache.

COP THIS!

If you think Thai courts are a bit rough on drug offenders after the 33 and 20-year sentences given to three Australians recently, how do you think they would have fared if they'd been found guilty of embezzlement? In July, a court in the northern province of Phetchabun jailed a former policewoman for 1001 years (that's right — one thousand and one years) on a $2000 embezzlement charge. But last month, the Bangkok appeals court upheld her plea that the sentence was unduly severe, and reduced it — to 855 years!

OVER!

In 1964, English cricket fanatic Michael Rowley bowled a maiden over. Completely. He married her, and they later had three children. But over the years, Mike's love for cricket far outweighed his love for wife Mildred. So much so, that she recently petitioned for divorce, citing cricket as "the other woman".

"He is totally obsessed with his cricket club," she told a London divorce court judge. "He can tell you the score in any game ever played. He can even remember what the weather was like, but he can't remember my birthday." The

husband, who retired, told the court: "Cricket is the only life for me, and I don't blame Mildred for the course she has taken."

And he's serious about the game being his life. Since the court granted Mildred her freedom, Mike has moved out of the family home — into temporary digs in the cricket club's pavilion.

WHERE'S THE POND?

When John Thompson, of Yorkshire, in England, decided to build a fish pond in his back garden, a remarkable thing happened. He started digging and turned up a washing machine.

Thompson kept on digging . . . porcelain ornaments and women's clothes were next . . . he kept at it . . . 20 bedsteads, railway sleepers the skeleton of a dog, a dead bird in a cage, two kitchen sinks. Then a four-door Ford Anglia with only 117,000 kilometres on the clock, complete with spare parts, also turned up. And it still worked.

Thompson said: "We got the engine ticking over, but the body fell to bits when we tried to pull it out with a tractor. Someone must have dug a big hole, driven it in and covered it up. I'm not digging any deeper. God knows what I'd find."

A neighbor said that the previous tenant was a man who "liked to dig holes".

SOME JOB

Some employers are taking rather unfair advantage of pretty young unemployed women. A fair bit of outrage hit a Perth employer who offered a girl the job of washing cars on the lot if she performed certain horizontal duties for the male staff. He was quite clear about it.

A more subtle, but equally distressing, thing happened to 19-year-old Diane Masters. She applied by phone for a job as a housekeeper, leaving her name and phone number.

At four o'clock in the morning, her phone rang. It was a man who said he had been given her number "by the agency." Diane says: "He was looking for sex. He said: 'Honey, this is the time we need you most'."

Seems somebody jumbled the paperwork. The housekeeping agency also handles work for an "introduction service." The Vice Squad are having a look.

NOT EXACTLY

A London gossip columnist tells the story of the middle-aged woman in the dress shop, looking at the same garment in two colors, red and green. "I'd better take the green," she announced, "because my husband wears purple so often."

"Ooh, trendy," said the shop assistant. Little did she know her customer was one Mrs Angela Runcie, who is the wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury . . .

AIR LINES

There's a good deal of rivalry between TAA and Ansett at present, based on their different ways of replenishing their fleets. TAA has chosen the wide-bodied European Airbus, and Ansett has stuck with faster but small American Boeings. Which brings us to the incident on a recent Ansett flight from Melbourne to Sydney. It seems the PA system clicked on, and the captain said: "You may have noticed that we're behind an Airbus, and it's quite a bit slower than we are." End of message. One passenger swears he heard half a dozen different conversations in the Sydney terminal after landing in which passengers explained to friends and family who'd been waiting, that a slow Airbus had held them up. Another triumph of word-of-mouth advertising.

SOME JOKE

A young British husband has vowed to track down the mystery woman who tried to ruin his wedding day recently. Every couple's nightmare came true for George Brown, 25, and his bride Margaret, 22, at their marriage ceremony in the Midlands town of Dudley. As the Rev Keith Tewkesbury formally asked the 400 guests: "If any one among you knows any just cause why these two people should not be joined together in holy matrimony, let him speak now."

From the back of the packed church, a young woman holding a baby in each arm walked forward, and said: "I do." While the congregation jeered, the Rev Tewkesbury explained to the young hoaxer that since a certificate had already been issued for the wedding to take place, her objection was invalid. She then disappeared, but George has vowed to find her — when he gets back home from his honeymoon.

A SLOW READER?

The Scunthorpe (UK) city fathers are rather pleased at the response to their amnesty on books long overdue from the local lending library. Among those returned anonymously was one which has been on loan since 1978. Its subject? How to improve your memory.

NEVER TOO OLD

Owners of a cinema in Taunton, England, reported that the number of old age pensioners taking advantage of reduced prices for tickets nearly doubled when the cinema offered the double bill of *Sex Is A Pleasure* and *Hot Nights*.

FUN RUN?

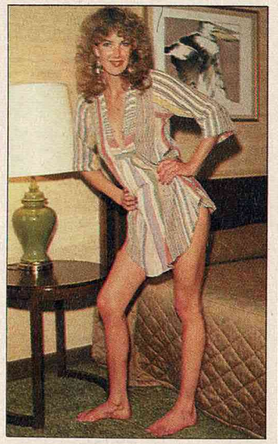
Australia's most unusual sporting event was held in October at what is officially the world's smallest registered mountain — Mt Wycheproof, which rises only a hundred-odd metres in Victoria's mallee district. A group of about 60 very dedicated (and very fit) men made the ascent in the extremely good time of just over six minutes. Which is good considering they were each carrying 63.5 kilo bags of wheat!

PERMANENTLY

A Cessnock (NSW) women's hairdresser's shop has the ultimate in eye-catching names. It's called Curl Up And Dye.

PHOTO STRIP

Getting it off for our December issue is leggy Louise Jackson, a student of Eastern Religions at Sydney University. She's off to Tibet shortly to mesmerise Lhasan lamas.



THERE IS A CLAUS THAT STATES,
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Parker Gift Set, $36.00*

Parker Classic Flighter De Luxe ballpen, stainless steel, $18.00.* Parker Classic Flighter De Luxe Pencil (0.5mm), stainless steel, *new product release*, $18.00.*

Say it with Parker.

Parker 75 sterling silver ballpen. $75.00.*

Parker 50 Flighter De Luxe fountain pen, stainless steel, $28.00.*

Parker 25 ballpen, matt black stainless steel, $13.95.*

Parker Classic Flighter ballpen, stainless steel, $16.00.*

Parker Classic Harlequin ballpen, stainless steel, $19.95.*

Parker T-Ball Special Pencil (0.5mm), 6 barrel colours, *new product release*, $5.95.*

Parker T-Ball Flighter De Luxe ballpen, stainless steel, $10.00.*

How do you say what you feel when mere words are not enough?
The answer is a special gift. A gift that sums up everything you feel inside.
It needn't be extravagant and it certainly won't be ostentatious.
It must, however, be of unquestionable quality. A Parker pen is such a gift.
And while you may care to spend as much as $2,675.00* on our gold
Presidential set, the Parker feeling can also cost as little as $5.95.†
A small price to pay for a gift that says so much.

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World's most wanted pens

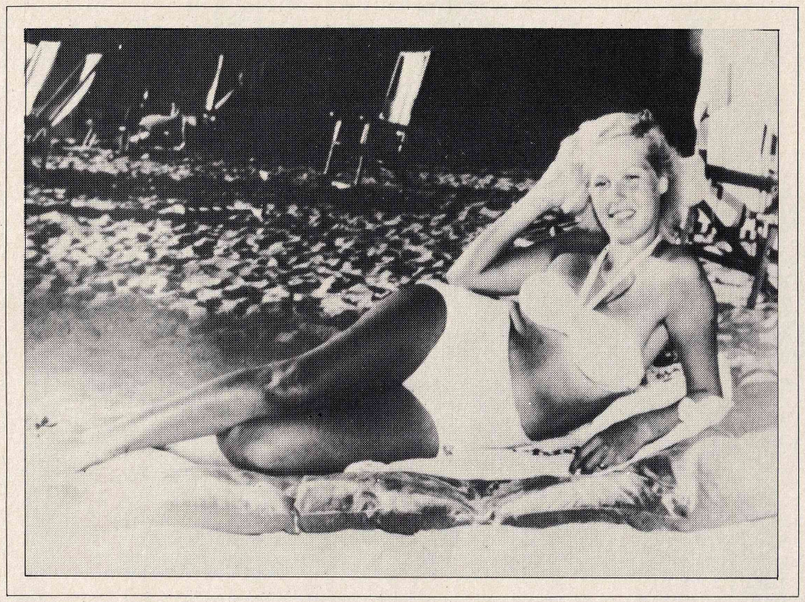
*Recommended retail prices. †Recommended retail price. Parker T-Ball Special.

066.P.619

Vikki La Motta was only 15 when the man she was to marry, middleweight boxing champion Jake La Motta, first set eyes on her. That was 36 years ago – the year Swedish Maud Adams was born. But the years have been more than kind to both, as these timeless pictures show.

RAGING BEAUTIES

SWEPT off her feet while she was barely a teenager by the man who was to become middleweight boxing champion of the world, Vikki La Motta had the sort of body that drives men wild with desire and women mad with jealousy Certainly, it drove Jake La Motta mad to the point where he often beat her savagely, and she finally left him after 11 tempestuous years. The story of their torrid love affair is the central theme in the Robert De Niro movie, *Raging Bull,* in which the part of Vikki is played by Cathy Moriarty, whom Hollywood is billing as the second Lana Turner. Today, at an incredibly well-preserved 51, Vikki La Motta



"I have always been the centre of attention. You get a reputation just by being good-looking. Men started paying me attention when I was only 13, and I liked it."

shows few signs of the years, and she still has a body women two-thirds her age would give their eye teeth for. Her secret, she says, is "to remain passionate about everything in life — particularly about people." If these pictures are any guide, Vikki La Motta has found the recipe for eternal youth. It is said she is at ease with men the way the Rockefellers are with money, but she has not re-married despite a series of much-publicised affairs — one with De Niro. She has had "plenty of offers", but still hasn't found the man to replace the Raging Bull of her youth.

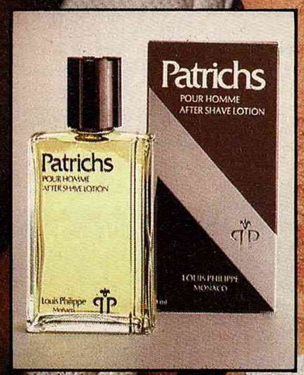
MAUD ADAMS

This is more of Maud than you'll see in her up-coming movie Tattoo, *in which the shapely Swede is covered (in more ways than one) by a tattoo artist. The result is startling.*

Some guys will do anything to stand out.

Others simply use Patrichs.

Patrichs After Shave. Never loud. Always noticed.



CPI 3154

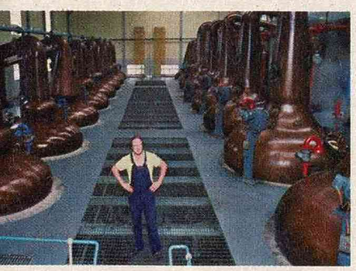
The Pure Malt Story.

The story of Malt is as old as the story of Whisky itself.

When you drink Scotch today, you're probably enjoying a blend of thirty to forty different Scotch Whiskies. Yet for many centuries before the art of blending was developed, the Scots drank only Malt Whisky – the "Water of Life", first mentioned in the Scottish Exchequer Rolls of 1494.

The barley is laid out to malt – and turned by men using wooden shovels or "shiels". After germination, it is dried over burning peat, a natural process which lends to Malt its distinctive aroma.

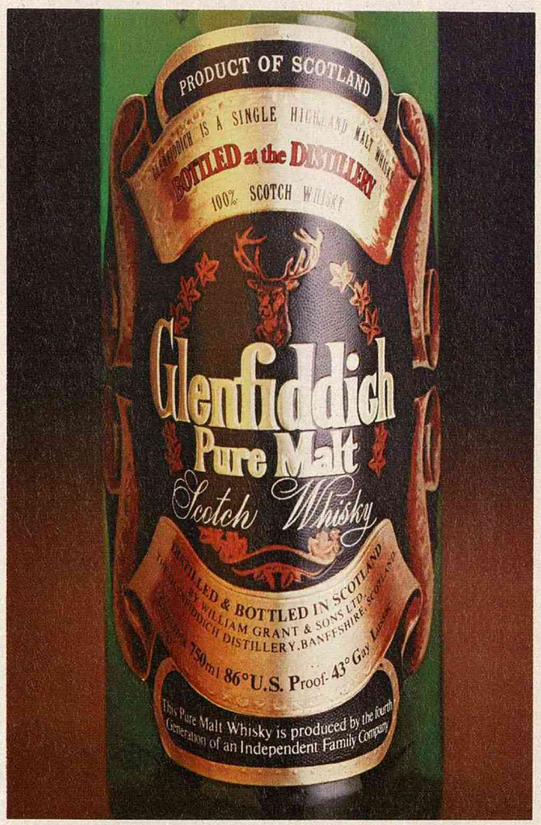
And Glenfiddich, made the traditional way, is perhaps the finest single Malt that the Highlands have to offer. It may cost a little more. But it is authentic. It is Glenfiddich – the Pure Malt Whisky.



Distinctive hand-beaten copper pots used for distilling. This adds to the unique character of Malt.

To develop the full flavour, the young spirit is matured in hand-made oak casks – yet another traditional skill.

Such a Scotch is Glenfiddich Pure Malt Whisky. Its pure taste comes from the fact that it is 100% Pure Malt. And from the fact that it is still made the traditional Highland way, under the care and supervision of the fourth generation of the Grant family. Right now, people are rediscovering a taste for Scotch Whisky as it used to be.



The Glenfiddich Distillery beside the pure "burn" water of the "Robbie Dubh". Glenfiddich is the only Highland Malt to be distilled, matured and bottled at the same distillery.

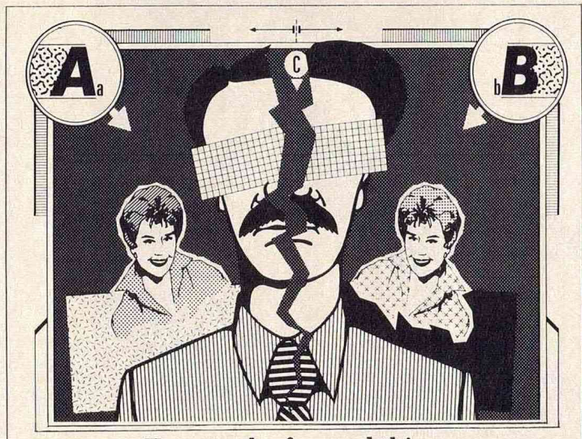
The Pure Malt Whisky.

AB1094·81 GRNT0072

THE PLAYBOY ADVISER

A while ago, I bought one of the popular Rubik's Cube games, and ever since I've found myself totally preoccupied with it. It's taking up just about every minute of my spare time, and sometimes eating into my work as well. I'm still at the stage where it can take me several hours to get all the sides matched up, and I'm wondering if I'm going about it the right way, as I've heard of people solving the puzzle in a matter of minutes. I figure that if I can find a way to speed up my performance, I'll then be able to use some of my spare time for other things again. Do you have any suggestions to help me work it out? — D.S., WA.

According to Don Taylor, senior lecturer in pure mathematics at the University of Sydney and author of Mastering Rubik's Cube *(Globe Press, $1.95), now in its ninth printing, it is possible with practice to change cube from chaos to order in less than five minutes — but only after you've read the book and fully understand how the cube works. Stories of little girls working it out in 30 seconds are just that — stories. The chances of stumbling across the solution are roughly one in 43 million, million, million, or to be more precise, one in 43,252,003,274,489,856,000, which is the total number of different combinations. As Dr Taylor says in his book: "The number of seconds in a year is about 30 million, so even if you could look at a thousand patterns every second, it would still take more than a thousand million years to see them all. Even if you restricted yourself to looking at patterns obtainable by moving just two faces — say red and green — you would still have more than 73 million to look at." Our advice: buy the book.*



Two much of a good thing.

For the past few years I've had what I thought was a pretty good thing going, but now it's turned out to be a problem, and I'm not quite sure what to do. Because of my job as a sales representative, I've been spending a roughly equal amount of time in two different States. I suppose I just let things happen, and set up house with two different women, and before long had two separate families, neither of them knowing about each other. It's been a bit expensive, but other than that has been fine, and I've never had any problems getting them to accept my long absences, as they have understood that these were just part of my job. The trouble is that lately, the pace has been getting too much for me, and my company wants to put me into an office job, which would involve my staying in the one place the whole time. I just don't know how I can choose between one family and the other, and apart from that, which ever family I left would probably find out about the other, and I could be in a lot of trouble. Do you think there is any way for me to get out of it? — T.Y., NSW.

Short of buying a one-way ticket to South America, there is probably no way that you can avoid facing at least some of the consequences of your double life, either now or in the future. Though you say you "just let things happen", the decision to establish two families was your own, and you must have had some idea of the risks involved. About all you can hope to do is make the crash a little less painful when it happens, perhaps by indulging in a bit of the honesty that has been absent for so long. Whether either family will wish to have anything more to do with you once they learn the full extent of your deception, is difficult to predict, but nobody is likely to come out completely unscathed.

When a guy has been going out with a girl for a while, do you think it is fair for him to expect her to start sharing some of the expenses? I'm talking about paying for meals, shows, etc. I've been going with my girlfriend for four months now, and we have a fairly good relationship, but she's never offered to help with any of the expenses, and I've never been game to ask her, in case it turned out to be the wrong thing to do and she got offended. I'd like to keep going out with her, but I'm not rich, so I would be grateful if you could tell me how I should handle things. — J.N., Vic.

The two of you have now been going together long enough for her to have some understanding of how you feel about things. If she is not sufficiently sensitive to be able to consider your position then perhaps it is time for you to start asking yourself why the relationship exists at all. Unless there is some reasonable level of communication, you can hardly expect the relationship to develop much further. On the other hand, it could be that you've been so afraid of doing the wrong thing by allowing her to help with expenses that you've discouraged her from thinking about it further. Find a way to drop a mild hint.

I'm trying to decide whether or not I should re-marry my ex-wife, and I'd be glad of your advice on the subject. We were married a few years ago, but split up after two years and got divorced. We didn't see each other for three years after that, then got together again, and had a sort of an affair. We almost got married again, but called it off at the last minute when we had a big argument about whose fault it was when we broke up the first time. Now it's happening all over again. We got involved, it's feeling great, and we're talking about marriage. What do you think of our chances? — P.R., SA.

There is an old saying: "those who fail to learn from the mistakes of the past are condemned to repeat them." If the two of you have genuinely been able to think through the problems that brought you into conflict in the past, then it is reasonable for you to hope that this time things might be different. If, however, you are just plunging blindly in, and letting things happen, you could be heading for the same old disaster. Whatever strong chemistry may exist between the two of you that keeps drawing you back together, it sounds as if there are also some major points of incompatibility, and that you are both going to have to work exceptionally hard to make it work.

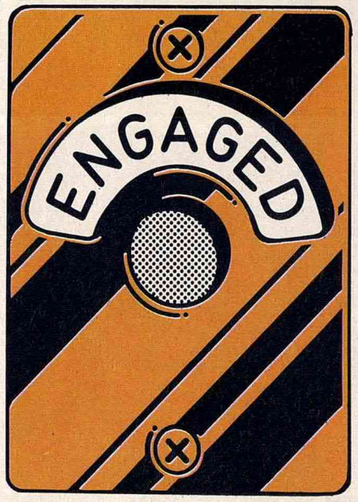
I have an unusual question to ask. Do you think that masturbation before reaching sexual maturity could

stunt penis growth? If so, is there anything you can do to regain your normal size, in the way that a plant growing in poor soil can be made to increase the size by moving it to better conditions. I hope you can answer this question, even if it does sound somewhat strange or unusual. — S.G., NSW.

There is absolutely nothing unique about your question. Unfortunately, strange legends about the physical and mental damage masturbation is supposed to cause still abound. We seem to have said this several times before, but no, early masturbation does not stunt the growth of the penis, nor does it make you go bald, blind or deaf, as other ridiculous stories have it. It is one of the most common activities known to man, frequently necessary when no other sexual outlet is available, and the last thing anyone should ever do is feel guilty.

I have this idea of getting some kind of four-wheel drive vehicle and driving right round Australia, probably going into the interior as well. At the moment I'm trying to decide whether I should get a petrol or diesel powered vehicle, and I'd like to know what you think. I've heard that diesels tend to be more economical and reliable, but on the other hand they are a bit slow, and with the long distances involved, I want to be able to go at a good speed a lot of the time. I've asked a few different people, such as dealers and travellers, but they all seem to disagree. — K.F., SA.

Unless you're planning to set a speed record, one of the larger diesel-engined four-wheel-drives currently available will have all the power you need for highway cruising. And if you're serious about getting well off the beaten track, you'll find a large diesel's low rev pulling power a great advantage. Also, if you're planning to venture into the extreme heat of the inland, you'll find a diesel less subject to the fuel vaporisation problems that frequently beset a petrol engine vehicle. A diesel engine also needs far less maintenance. No matter what choice of vehicle you make, there is likely to be a certain amount of compromise involved, as no machine is perfect for every situation, but taken all round, a diesel is likely to have the advantage for a trip such as the one you are planning.



Keeping your mind engaged helps take it off the problem.

I'd be grateful if you could give me some advice on a very embarrassing problem I have. Just thinking about it makes me feel stupid, and I haven't had the nerve to discuss it with anyone. The trouble is that when I'm in a public toilet, I find I just can't urinate if anyone else is nearby. I know that it shouldn't matter that there is anyone else around, but I can't seem to do anything about it, and it sometimes makes life difficult. I feel like a fool having to wait for an empty cubicle when there is plenty of space at the wall. Is there any way of curing the problem? — W.L., NSW.

You might be surprised at just how many other men have a similar problem. Even a little self-consciousness can cause the muscles which control urination to tense up, and some men have gone to amazing lengths to avoid the problem. Recent research has indicated that the easiest way around the problem is to perform some complicated mental exercise that will take the mind completely away from the surroundings and the proximity of others. Mental arithmetic is good. The next time you are at a crowded public urinal, try thinking through a series of complicated multiplications.

I own a 70 model MGB with a Garrett Turbo, and intend taking it off the road and storing it in a garage for some time. It has been rust proofed, and the body and engine are in very good condition. What steps can I take to ensure that the car doesn't deteriorate, as I am hopeful that it will increase in value over the coming years? — M.H., Vic.

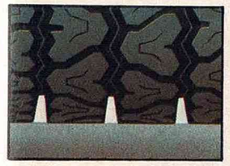
As long as the car is kept in a garage free of moisture and dust, there is no reason why it should deteriorate at all during its period of storage. Drain out the car's oil, petrol and water, and remove the battery. Place the car up on blocks, and remove the wheels. Then get a good quality car cover, and fasten this very securely all round. You could also place some extra cover underneath the car. It is certainly worth the effort as MGBs, while still plentiful, are bound to gain in value in future years, with so few open sports cars now being manufactured anywhere in the world.

Because of my work, I'm going to be away from my girlfriend for at least six months, with not very much chance of making even a quick visit. We have a really good relationship — both sexually and in other ways — and leaving her is going to be hard. What worries me most is how to keep the relationship going so that things will be the same as before once we get back together. It's not that I distrust her or anything, but I know how much she enjoys sex, and I don't know how she'll get by without it any better than I will. Is there anything I can do to keep reminding her of how good our sex life is so that she will not start looking around for someone else? — D.Q., SA.

You don't indicate how long the relationship has been going, or what level of commitment you have made to each other, so it is therefore difficult to predict what the effect of a six months' separation will be. However, if it is as solid as you suggest, it must have a good chance of surviving the time apart. What you can't do, however, is expect anything to remain exactly the same so that you can just pick up where you left off as soon as you return home. Inevitably there will be some changes, and if you try to act as if there were not, you could easily lose what it is you value so highly. Both of you have a right to lead independent lives, and while you can keep in contact by letter or phone and remind her of what the two of you have together, you can't expect her to stop living just because you're not there. Chastity belts went out of style several hundred years ago. We suggest you sit down and talk it over, and try to come to some mutually agreeable arrangement.

The Playboy Adviser *will answer all reasonable questions about your lifestyle, pub arguments, hangups or fantasies. Send them to* Playboy Adviser, *Box 4088, GPO, Sydney 2001.*

INTRODUCING T/A® HIGH TECH™ RADIALS



The varied pitch ratio of the computer-designed tread minimizes noise patterns and provides a quiet ride.

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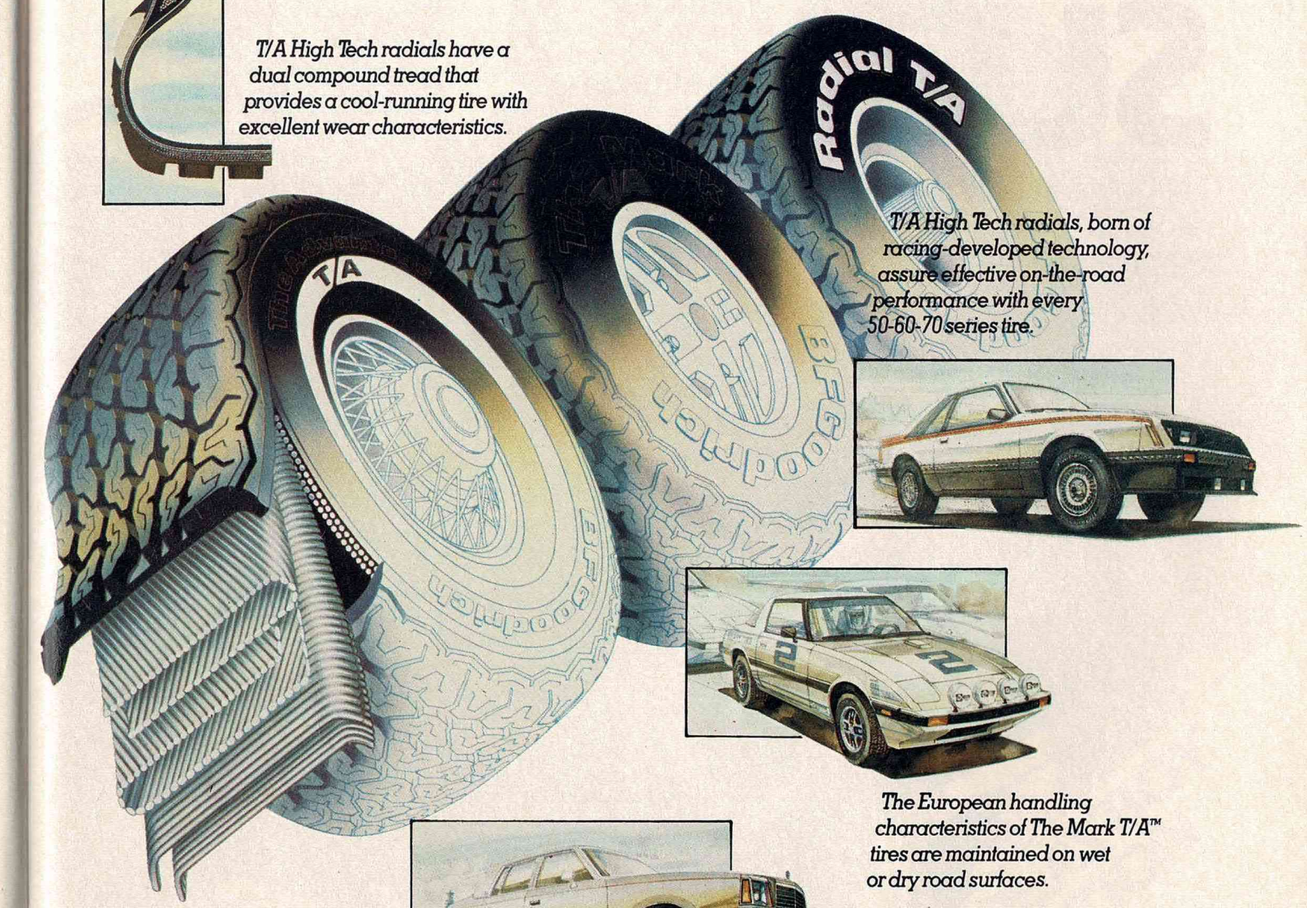
T/A High Tech radials have a dual compound tread that provides a cool-running tire with excellent wear characteristics.



T/A High Tech radials, born of racing-developed technology, assure effective on-the-road performance with every 50-60-70 series tire.

The European handling characteristics of The Mark T/A™ tires are maintained on wet or dry road surfaces.

Unique sidewall styling sets T/A High Tech radials apart at a glance. Four-ply DuroGard® folded belt system and two radial plies provide the incredible combination of strength and flexibility.

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By Australian Playboy

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Continued on page 30

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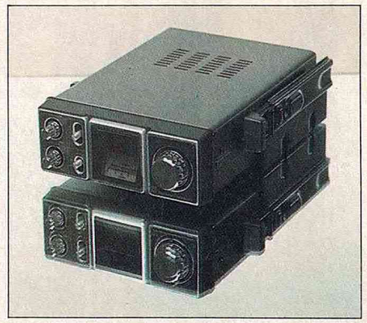
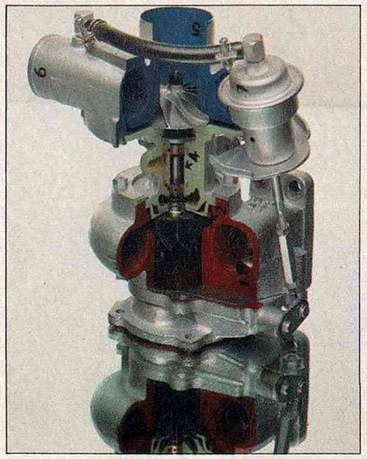
- Recaro orthopaedic safety contoured seats, including tilt-forward, lumbar adjustment and netting head-restraints from Roman Automotive at Sydney Speed Shop, Clarke St, Crows Nest (Ph 439 7126). Value: $900.
- Rallyspeed Street-n-scrub bullbar/-winchmount incorporating light-mounts, by Rallyspeed, of 264 Pacific Highway, Crows Nest (Ph 438 1195). Value: $350.
- Modular wheels two-piece, new design, on/off road purpose, from Sunraysia, of 181 Parramatta Rd, Auburn (Ph 647 1544). Value: $160.
- B.F. Goodrich Trailmaker steel-belted radial on/off road tyres, from B.F. Goodrich tyre outlets throughout Australia. Value: $480.
- National Panasonic 40-channel CB radio, from Dick Smith Electronics stores throughout Australia. (Ph 888 3200). Value: $190.
- Cibie lighting system, including Type 95 overhead, Type 35 front fog, 100-watt main beams, Type 95 rear reversing and Type 40 red safety fog, from John Holdsworth Automotive Lighting, of 43A Northcote Street, St Leonards (Ph 439 2560). Value: $650.
- Old Man Emu extra heavy duty off-road shock absorbers, from OME Equip, 210 Palmer St, Surry Hills (Ph 331 3710). Value: $220.
- Prince On-board Computer, by Mobile One, 17 Sloane St, Marrickville (Ph 516 4500). Value: $350.
- Warn Miniwinch, with 3500lb line-pull, electric power, from Ateco Suzuki, Revesby (Ph 772 4466). Value: $720.
- Momo "Grip" steering wheel, for on/off road control, from Carisma Lyons Rd, Drummoyne (Ph 81 3752). Value: $95.
- Metric lightguards for on/off road light protection, from Metix, Pittwater Rd Narrabeen (Ph 913 2374). Value: $25.
- Wheelfares by Sunraysia, Jerrycan rack and equip by OME, special fittings by Rymec. Value: $350.
- Black and white Playboy livery in acrylic Acran paint, by Woollahra Motor Body Works, of Glenmore Rd, Edgecliff, (Ph 33 4282) and Fender Signs of Pittwater Rd, Brookvale (Ph 93 5373). Value: $2500.





- Front-to-rear carpeting from Davenport Motor Trimming, 33 Alleyne St, Chatswood (Ph 407 0259). Value: $350.

- Electrical wiring, special switch gear, relays, etc from Vane's Auto Electrical Ltd, 453 Pacific Highway, Artarmon (Ph 427 9811). Value: $315.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: 1: Entry is free and open to all residents of Australia, except employees of Australian Consolidated Press, its related companies and its advertising agencies, and relatives of those employees. 2: The winner will be the entrant whose entry form is first drawn at random on December 2, 1981, from all valid entry forms received. 3: All entrants have an equal opportunity to win, but entry forms will not be considered where entry would contravene State law. 4: The decision of the judges will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. All entries remain the property of Australian Consolidated Press. 5: Entries close with the last mail on December 1, 1981. 6: The prize may not be redeemed for cash in any circumstances, nor is it transferable.

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THE PLAYBOY FORUM

a continuing dialogue on contemporary issues between playboy and its readers

THE NEGUS STYLE

Thanks for plucking one of TV's smartest talking heads out from behind the camera to answer some fairly pertinent questions. I guess sex appeal is an unfortunate, but important, part of making it into the nation's living room and I'm convinced George Negus' (PLAYBOY interview, September) sex appeal has more to do with the fact that he looks like the average sort of bloke — genuine and very credible — rather than a Hollywood dummy.

If it took the incredible popularity of *60 Minutes* to project the Negus style to a mass audience, then we should be grateful to the producers. Negus is a man of expansive thought and great charisma, and the show keeps perfect pace with his style. The format often drops him into some tight spots, but the guy's manner — it could even be mistaken for courageous naivety — certainly gets results. I was half-fearing that your interview would expose him as something less than the unaffected individual. It didn't, and I'm relieved and heartened to conclude that the off-camera Negus is every bit as genuine as the on-camera character suggests.

K. Edmunds,
Northwood, SA.

He is, and at heart he sees himself, very much as a working journalist first and foremost. — Ed.

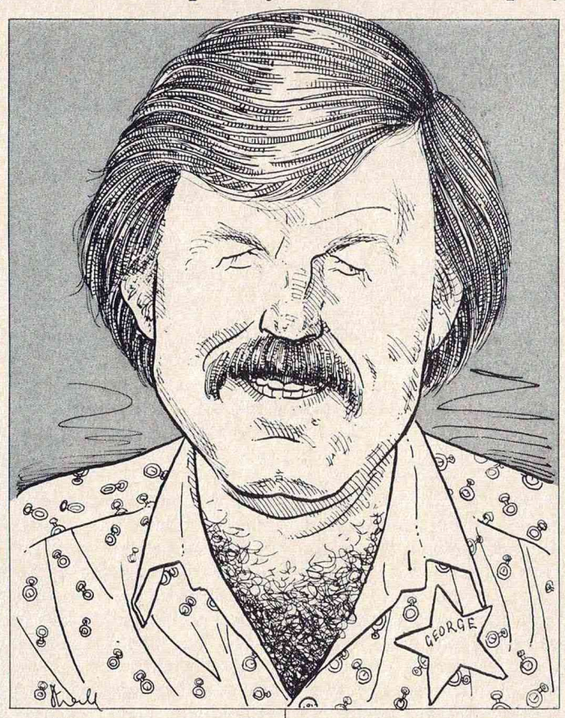
HOUSE-HAUNTER?

I've always thought George Negus one of the more interesting souls to haunt our homes via the idiot box. That said, I was particularly intrigued to find him the subject of your September interview.

Negus is the genuine Australian character with a huge degree of sophistication, education and a sense of individualism to stand him apart in what is overall a pretty mediocre field. Nonetheless, it would seem that the vehicle which has carried his rugged good looks to by far his largest audience has also served to damage his credibility with those who recognised his investigative skill. I refer to *60 Minutes*, which too often slips out of the field of really in-depth journalism and into the domain of mainstream entertainment. While there is no denying that the show's very slickness of production, wide-reaching professional standards and large budget make it a prime-time success, I feel these have been achieved at great cost.

The impact borders on the superficial with one critic being so unkind to label it as TV's answer to the more sensational newspapers. I have no doubt Negus is still the committed professional, but I'm left wondering whether it's his reporting skill or what the TV rags refer to as his "sex appeal" which is now the more important commodity.

L. McNeil,
Sandgate, Qld.



THE NEGUS ETHIC

In his interview, by Paul Dougherty in the September PLAYBOY, George Negus' contention that "toeing the correct Australian line" consists of being "intolerant, racist, anti-democratic, subservient", and that Australia "is the most unfree free country in the world", would get little argument from most intelligent people. He could have added with equal certainty that Australians are closet romantics brought to that impasse by the smugness and complacency of the Menzies' legacy, ably kept in force by the dullness of the party that politician founded, and by his pupil, Malcolm Fraser. If Thoreau was alive and in Australia today, he might be stunned by the extent and depth of the quiet desperation in the lives lived by the mass of Australians. It has almost reached the proportions of an art form.

60 Minutes is the male closet romantic's trench-coated, Bogartian, fantasised, idealised self, manifesting itself beyond fiction in the entrapment of suburban living rooms every Sunday night, where one hour after commencement, Negus, Martin and Leslie go riding off into the sunset like heroes must, leaving behind them those who live life vicariously with the perennial resolution: I'm going to do things like that, too — maybe next year.

Maurice Mallick,
Melbourne.

SPARE CASH

I thought your story Midnight Spares in the September issue was spot on. I recently fitted a set of mudflaps to my Ford, and I thought readers might benefit from my experience. Before deciding where to buy, I made a few phone calls to check out prices, and this is what I found: Speed shop A — $5.99 a pair; Speed shop B — $8.99 a pair; "Genuine (Ford) Dealer" — $8.80 (plus tax) EACH! I finally bought a pair (and fitted them myself in under two hours) for an all-up price of less than $3. Where did I buy them? At my neighborhood K-Mart, where they were on special for $2.98, reduced from $3.38. There has to be a lesson in this somewhere. Let's have lots more stories like that one from Rob Luck.

J.K.,
Redbank Plains, Qld.

Reader J.K. reinforces his point with the K-Mart box tab bearing the price sticker. The lesson, of course, is to shop around before you buy. There are bargains to be had in many areas — not just motor spares — simply by buying house brands. — Ed.

FITTING THE CRIME?

Just peel back the scab of Australia's pathetic penal history and it is all too simple to expose the raw streak of savagery which has always dogged the system. William O'Meally's account of The Flogging

(PLAYBOY, September) was a toe-curling reminder that it is only the methods and not the sentiments which have changed. Punishment, not reform, is still very much the prime aim of the majority of today's custodians.

The underlying factor of corporal — or capital — punishment is that one individual is forced to inflict suffering or death upon another. It's called playing God, and too many pro-death-penalty folk make the mistake of forgetting that another human being has to pull the lever.

A flogging is a degrading form of punishment, but the point which came out of the O'Meally story was that the experience must ultimately do some damage to the human dignity of the man wielding the whip. What sort of justice is it when the executioner is compelled to hide his identity?

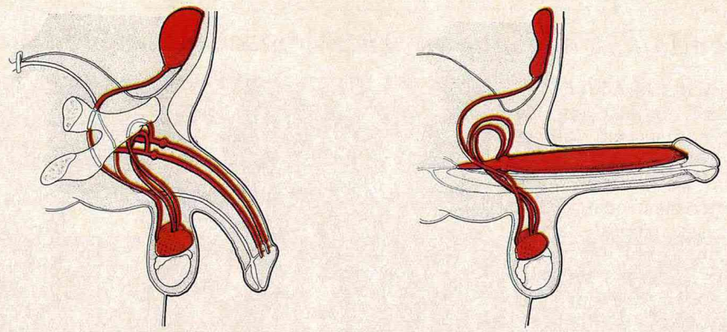
L.K. Williams,
Blacktown, NSW.

SECOND INNINGS

I thought the great umpire had dealt me an unfair blow when he dismissed my sexual function at the tender age of 57. The chance for a second innings was something I'd not dare dream about before I read the Bionic Dick story (November PLAYBOY). More power to the pump — it seems far preferable to the wire contraption. The very "naturalness" of the inflatable device makes it my ideal solution to the impotency problem, but I was hoping that you might supply more detail so the lady in my life will know exactly what she is in for.

T.L.,
Bankstown, NSW.

There is no great mystery about the method which could add 100 percent inflation to your sex life. The hardware consists of four items, all inserted during the operation. The most important are the twin inflatable cylinders which are inserted in the penis shaft by means of a small scrotal incision. The fluid to inflate the cylinders is stored in a reservoir implanted under the abdominal muscles. A fluid transfer pump/bulb hangs loosely in the scrotum, and is connected by tubing to the reservoir and the cylinders. Repeated pumping of the bulb inflates the cylinders and brings the penis to erection. A release valve attached to the pump/bulb allows the fluid to leave the cylinders and return to the reservoir. Because the release valve is small and located with the pump/bulb assembly, the possibility of accidental release and loss of erection is minimal. It's relatively simple and could put an end to all those limp excuses you've been using of late. Remember — it comes to attention and returns to its hanging posture under your operation, which means it will stay erect as long as you desire — Ed.



Where there's life, there's hope. And for the thousands of Australian men suffering from premature impotence, the prosthesis offers hope for a new sex life. Perth surgeons who perfected the technique currently have a long waiting list.

CENSORSHIP

Just how much we've let the new conservatism pervade all aspects of our lifestyle can be appreciated when we take a look at what issues we're defending/opposing today. The economic times have all but silenced the student voice of dissent on housing, welfare, war and censorship. The sad result is that all the gains made during the permissive '60s and '70s are steadily being rolled back by the new conservatives. On the censorship front, it is still hard to believe that in a population of only 14 million, the various States sill appoint boards of review to protect the morals of their citizens. The boards appear so blatantly political that the whole tone of opinion tends to do a backflip with the toppling of an individual State government. Isn't it time Australia joined the rest of the world by bringing all aspects of censorship under the control of a federal (non-political) agency? If somebody must tell us what we can watch and read, then let's make it on a uniform basis.

I.P.,
Windsor, Qld.

GAMES FEVER?

I note that the nation is awash with that mad tide of sporting fervor which precedes such events as the Commonwealth and Olympic Games. The deployment of manpower and cash to get the 1982 Brisbane event on the road can hardly be justified in a climate of ailing economic fortune, racial tension and public disillusionment for international sport. Just who stands to gain from this insane piece of international posturing? If we're very lucky, we (or at least Queensland) might just about break even through the tourist dollar, and the ABC's ratings might jump a peg or two. But if there are any idealists thinking the Games will endorse the spirit of international understanding and the global community spirit, they're living in dreamland. Weren't the waves caused by the Springboks' tour of New Zealand enough to suggest that the African Commonwealth nations might mount a Games' boycott? The record speaks for itself: the last four Olympics were dogged by farce, propaganda, terrorism and racial tension, with Black Power in Mexico City, the Black Septemberists in Munich, the African boycott of Montreal and the American boycott of Moscow. There is ample animosity among the Commonwealth nations to suggest that controversy will be a certainty rather than a mere possibility in Brisbane.

T. Porter,
Northcote, Vic.

Your assertion that the amount of manpower and money spent on the Games cannot be justified is not borne out by the record. The civic fathers of Melbourne (1956) and Perth (1962) were rubbing their hands with glee after their respective Games. The amount of money generated by such an event, in addition to the usual tourist benefits, is immense, to say the least. That's why the fever. — Ed.

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IN A CERTAIN village of Arabia, there once dwelt a lissom, well-favored woman who had quite fallen out of love with her husband. He was a fuller — a worker with cloth — surly, stupid and bad-tempered. He treated his wife contemptuously, and though he did not know it, was repaid in full, because whenever he left for his workshop a handsome trooper would gallantly enter his house, his bed, and his wife for an hour or so in the morning. But they grew tired of the secrecy.

One day, the trooper said: "I have resolved to rent the vacant house that lies just across the road and I have decided to dig a tunnel, from that house to thine.

"And thou shalt say to thy husband that thy sister and her husband, a very handsome, tall horse-trooper, have just come here from distant parts and will live in that house. And thy husband must call on them."

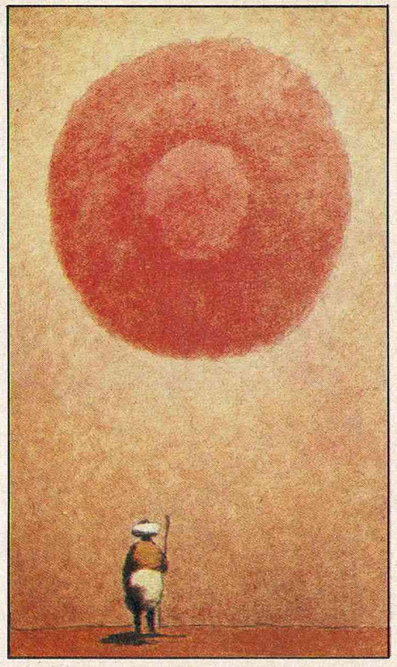
When the fuller came home one afternoon a few days later, his wife told him about the arrival of her sister and her husband. She told him he must make a call on them.

The fuller grumbled, but went. When he entered the house, he found a tall, handsome trooper, who admitted to being his brother-in-law, with a beautiful woman sitting on a Persian rug. He salaamed to her, but he could not believe his eyes. In every respect, she looked exactly like his own wife, an absolute twin. He faltered out a few expressions of welcome, but overcome with strange doubts, soon excused himself and left.

The wife — for it was she — hastily put on her usual clothes and ran through the tunnel. When the fuller arrived, she was awaiting his arrival expectantly.

"It is a mystery," he said. "There was indeed a trooper who greeted me and with him his wife, who is uncannily like you."

"We were always thought to have some similarity, but as for me, I never noticed it," she said. "Did you hear her speak? Our voices *are* rather close in tone."



So the fuller made his way across the street again and the wife, hastily altering her dress, flew through the tunnel. Once there, the fuller, spoke to the trooper's wife and she replied. The fuller stood bewildered, shaking his head.

"What is wrong?" asked the trooper.

"This woman is my wife and the speech is her speech!"

The trooper and the wife laughed heartily. "Is my sister not at home?" asked the woman. "Go back and see for yourself. And when you have done that, come here again to have a glass of wine with us."

The same ruse was repeated once more, and when the fuller returned, he sat down with the trooper and drank, in his bafflement, one cup of wine after another until he was quite drunken and snoring. The soldier retired to the bedchamber with the fuller's wife and finally arose about mid-morning.

He then went to work. First, he shaved off the long hair on the sides of the fuller's head, after the manner of the Turks, and clipped the rest of it short. He put walking shoes on the fuller's feet, buckled a sword belt with a sword around his middle, furnished him with a quiver and bow, and clapped a *tarboosh* on his head. To complete the picture, he put a few silver pieces into his pouch and into his sleeve thrust a letter addressed to the Governor of Isfahan, ordering him to enroll the bearer, Rustam Khamartakani, in the Turkish garrison, with a monthly allowance of a hundred dirhams, 10 pounds of bread, and five pounds of meat. Then he carried the still-snoring fuller to a mosque and left him on the steps.

When the man awoke, he stumbled to a nearby pond to get a drink — and beheld himself quite altered. "I must be a Turkish soldier," he said, and started off in one direction. "No, that can't be, because I am Ahmad the fuller," he said, turning to go the opposite way. Finally, when he was almost dizzy, it came to him that he should go home to ask his wife. She would certainly recognise him.

He burst open the door of his house and confronted his wife, who drew back in fear.

"Soldier, what are you doing breaking into the house of Ahmad the fuller?" she cried. "Know you that Ahmad has a brother in-law who is a man of rank and a friend of the Sultan's?"

Ahmad took off the *tarboosh* and beat his chest with his fist. "*I* am Ahmad, wife! Admit it, or I'll thrash some sense into thy head!"

"What is that scroll hidden in your sleeve? Perhaps it bears your name," she said.

Ahmad plucked the scroll out and looked at it. Then he smiled. "This proves I'm right," he said, "because I can't read. If I was some trooper, I could read it."

The woman snatched it away from him. "I can read it," she said. She was silent a moment, then she said: "Your name is Rustam Khamartakani, and you are on your way to join the garrison at Isfahan. Now begone, before I call my brother-in-law!"

Ahmad stumbled out of his house with his eyes rolling and his brain turning somersaults. He had walked quite a way before his head began to settle and a new idea came to him. His comrades in the street of the fullers — where all the workshops were — would surely recognise him and help to unravel this mystery. But he had forgotten something.

Some of the Turkish officers had used to send their washing to that street, and paid never a stiver for the service. The fullers had complained to the Sultan, and the Sultan had replied: "You are in the right. If any man who has not paid you appears, stone him."

At this time, too, the fullers had been hearing a town rumor that a Turkish soldier had taken Ahmad's wife away to his own house and were angry. So when they saw a wild-looking fellow in a *tarboosh* coming into their street, one said: "Give him a stone in the stones for poor Ahmad!"

When the stones began bouncing off him, Ahmad turned tail and ran. "It is the truth of Allah," he said to himself, "I *am* a Turk."

He took the dirhams from his pouch, bought some rations, hired a horse, and set out to Isfahan to report.

— Retold by Peg Tercio

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Playboy Interview

BOB ELLIS

a scion of the left reflects upon the heady days of ferret journalism in a perfect oz

BOB ELLIS, self-appointed conscience of the Australian film industry, playwright, arts columnist and mainstay of theatre and film rallies, has been referred to in terms of reference as wide as "Australia's oldest enfant terrible*" to "Australia's leading bullshit artist."*

For nearly 20 years, he has worn the cloak of a down-at-the-heel literary ferret — a role well suited to him during the heady days of "ferret journalism" through the pages of the sadly missed Nation Review, *where he served time as both film-critic and all-round troublemaker. His pen dripped a combination of biographical detail (for some inexplicable reason he was convinced there was a world out there panting to learn), gossip and that delightful journalistic tradition of not allowing facts to stand in the way of a good story. In doing so, he brought down the wrath of people as diverse in their '70s status-making as John Pilger and David Williamson.*

The fact that Ellis survived his Nation Review *days without being set upon in a dark alley and given a good duffing surprised many — most of all, one suspects, Ellis himself. Easily fobbed off by some as a journalistic ratbag, he has, nevertheless, contributed in part to the early '70s revival of an Australian strain of theatre with* The Legend of King O'Malley *(co-written with Michael Boddy) and to the same revival affecting the Australian film industry: first with his screenplay for* Newsfront, *from which he insisted his name be removed, so incensed was he at having his writing tampered with by mere producers and directors; subsequently, he wrote* Fatty Finn *and the less than decent treated* Maybe This Time, *a film he co-wrote with wife, Anne Brooksbank.*

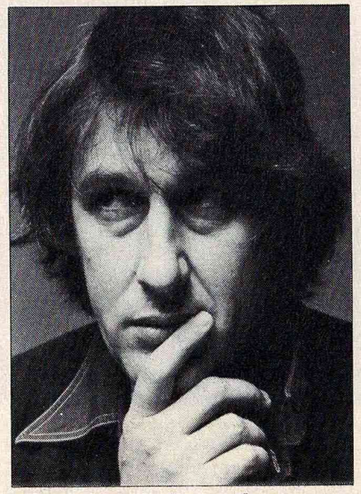
Currently in post-production is the $1.8 million Goodbye Paradise, *starring Ray Barrett, which is an ode to one of his favorite writers, Raymond Chandler, and is set amid the dazzling decay of Surfers Paradise. Along the way, Ellis has also written numerous screenplays which have met the fate of most "fantastic film ideas", travelling from producer's bottom drawer to bottom drawer. He holds hope for a project instigated by David Putnam (producer of* Midnight Express*) and Phillip Adams called* The Nostradamus Kid, *a screenplay based on the adolescent experiences of Ellis' favorite character — Bob Ellis.*

A scion of the Left, he was born and raised in the NSW country town of Murwillumbah of a Seventh Day Adventist family. Religion and country towns loom large in the Ellis vision of Australia gone astray. The former, Ellis rejected midway through his 40-year journey to self-promoted notoriety; the latter he wants a return to not only for himself, but to sort out the rather muddled thinking of his fellow countrymen.

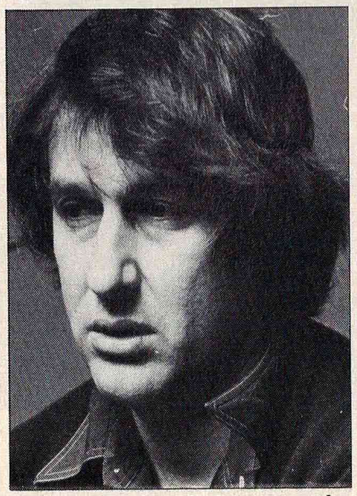
Such subjects as the sacking of Gough Whitlam, his long friendship with former Chinese internee Francis James (around whom he wrote The James Dossier, *a musical which had the misfortune to open the day following Whitlam's sacking), past affairs, personal failings and a Chekhovian view of the loss of the Australian identity tend to haunt his writing. As if to clear his system of the ailments of being a '60s-'70s individual finding it essential in coming to terms with his country in the '80s, he threw them into a potpourri of a play called* A Very Good Year, *which tried to do for those two decades what David Williamson's* Celluloid Heroes *hoped to accomplish in holding up a mirror to the Australian film industry.*

Both plays made up for in cultural back-biting what they lacked in substance. Where the premiere of Celluloid Heroes *gathered together those producers, directors and such beings etched in the play (Ellis included, observed by Williamson as a singularly repulsive screenwriter, Nestor Snell),* A Very Good Year *had as part of its opening night audience Gough Whitlam, Francis James, poet Les Murray and an old girlfriend or two. In baring*

"Most people in the ABC holding important positions were Englishmen — some sackees from Z-Cars and Yorkshire TV, all congealed into this officers' mess from which they shut out reality and drank heavily."



"Some have littleness thrust upon them. John Howard and I sat for the same general maths paper, the Leaving Certificate, the same all over NSW, and I passed maths for the only time in my life. He failed."



"Nation Review *died because the Left did not believe it was worth 60 cents a week to keep it going, to keep a forum from which opinion could be freely expressed, alive. They are as silly as that."*

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their hearts, it seemed, old correspondents Williamson and Ellis had both fallen on their feet — in an Achilles-like fashion.

Ellis, being the prolific cultural gossip columnist he is, leaves little room for an outsider to be able to read between Ellis' lines to separate truth from hearsay or opinion from wilful fantasy — albeit written with a cleverness that forgives many sins. Regular PLAYBOY contributor ***Denis Whitburn*** *(who is himself a produced playwright through the pigheadedness of Ellis in mounting* The Siege of Frank Sinatra, *already turned down by four leading theatrical companies) has felt the wag of the Ellis tongue in print. Putting aside the boxing gloves he thought might be needed when they next met, Ellis got together with Whitburn overlooking Sydney harbor on a day that reflected in the changing sky the colorings of their conversation.*

"Being in Ellis' company," Whitburn says, "can either be an enlightening or downright depressing experience. It is dependent on the mood of the occasion — and that is one talent I have sensed in him from the time we first met in early 1980."

Shrugged off by some individuals (usually those who have suffered his tongue or pen) as irrelevant or a poser who should know when to keep his opinions to himself, Ellis serves to keep alive the need to fight for a cultural heritage in theatre, film and TV. He could have fitted, without any trouble, into the old Bulletin *drinking schools, rubbing shoulders with Lawson and Patterson, according to Whitburn's view. "There is an Australian air about the man that I find unique," he says. "He is both a scruffy mug lair and precise thinker, able to encapsulate in a few stinging words the interminable ramblings of his peers when trying to argue terms of conscience and art versus money or career opportunism. He fights for an* Australian *theatre, an* Australian *film industry, and is repelled by the influence of foreign cultures on them."*

PLAYBOY: What's happened to the defiantly Australian playwrights of the Nimrod Theatre of the early 1970s — yourself among them?

ELLIS: They've been treated foully. Michael Boddy and Peter Kenna were virtually blackballed — told they'd never have plays put on there again after *King O'Malley, Biggles, Hamlet On Ice* and *A Hard God* had been the great achievements of the early Nimrod. The middle men survive and the creators go down. More power resides with management. Boddy is not writing for the theatre, Kenna is in decline, Ray Lawler is frightened out of his wits. Me? I'll probably never write another play. When you realise that such people could write two plays a year and should have them put on, it's a tragedy.

PLAYBOY: Has it come to be this way because those in control of the theatre companies have direct access, or "the ear", of the funding bodies — the Theatre Board, the Arts Council — to be able to preserve the status quo to the detriment of the writer?

ELLIS: I think, more than that, they have the establishment personality. They all tend to be slightly effete, slim-hipped former schoolteachers, long on tact, reticence and Britishness, acceptable in the kind of circles that find rather embarrassing the average personality of the average writer — the man behind the tankard falling down the stairs and shouting at his wife across the room. Fifteen years ago, Australian theatre consisted of actors who mostly for nothing — or very much near it — were trying, in

"The least literate and least competent people that I know are film producers. They have all this status through an accident of history."

vain, to imitate Southern accents in bad productions of Tennessee Williams, and this was their whole career. We're still living with the residue of the ashes of that tradition. It's my belief that John Bell, for instance, having failed effectively to carry spears in London, came back to what he was most truly qualified to do — teach the theatrical tradition of NIDA. He found himself, after the accident of *King O'Malley,* in the grip of a bandwagon he saw would advance his career, and would eventually put him in the position where he could do wilful productions of Shakespeare in great numbers. So he held his nose and did the necessary number of Williamson and Kenna productions until he could achieve a building and a subsidy big enough to go on and tediously explore all those variations of Shakespearean drag and Shakespearean Bankstown, where his heart truly lies.

PLAYBOY: Is what we in effect are talking about here that through subsidised theatre, there is an eradication of Australian character taking place?

ELLIS: To some extent, yes. There is this tokenism which is a monster threatening to take over. What I am saying is, their hearts are not in the right place. Their hearts are home in England, where many of them came from or spent their most exciting years. Certainly, it's where most of them yearn for. As a rule, great Australian patriots here are people like Lex Marinos, *Kingswood Country's* token "wog". People of non-English descent whose families arrived here relatively recently.

PLAYBOY: Would what you are saying be typified by the wrangle that went on between the Australian Writers' Guild and the major theatre companies to negotiate a standard contract for writers' royalties?

ELLIS: Well, it's a money culture we live in, and a person has no status until he has income. The least literate and least competent people I know, as a rule, are film producers. They have all this tremendous status through an accident of history. They have, out of the funding bodies, enormous incomes compared with other people so placed. I find it absurd that Jim McElroy is respected and Peter Kenna forgotten. It is not to do with ability or achievement. One is given money by the government, and the other is begrudged it. Whenever you have people like playwrights seeking a good deal, they have no power or threat. They are not seen to be persons of substance. They seem to be made of straw.

PLAYBOY: Standing at the Arts Council or Literature Board waiting for a grant or handout?

ELLIS: Precisely. But this is not an uncommon thing in Australian history. Henry Lawson, through his best years, worked as a house-painter and odd-jobsman while writing. This was thought to be proper. The fact that he wound up with his face on the money was no compensation. The most vivid example of the writer as a person lacking substance is someone like Jim O'Neil, who tended to assault those people playing warders in his plays. Once, at a dinner party, when placed opposite a judge who had sentenced him to life imprisonment, there was a ruckus which destroyed a great deal of furniture. It is difficult for people with British personalities like those on theatre boards to come face to face with as much life as that and come away unscathed.

PLAYBOY: But it's *anger* that comes through in good writing, isn't it, like in Irish literature?

ELLIS: It's said that every 60 years, it's Ireland's duty to cross the sea and save English theatre. Wilde, Shaw, Behan, O'Casey. Never at any stage in its history has Ireland had a population of more than five million people, and at most stages in its history 90 percent of those people were illiterate,

but look at what they've given the world of theatre.

PLAYBOY: Considering Australia has an Irish tradition, submerged though it may be, why haven't we used it, or the anger, the way the Irish have?

ELLIS: I don't know where it all went. We were once very game and rambunctious, full of mateship and adventure, prepared to take to the road, run revolutions and dig for gold, and I don't know where it all went. There is one theory that what happened to Australia was the Scots, and Scottish tendencies — Bruce, Menzies, Fraser, McMahon, Gorton and Whitlam — have overwhelmed the inherent Irishness of the country. For traditional reasons, the Scots tend to be rich and the Irish poor. What we have is a Celtic war going on. The bawdy intellectuals of Carlton against the stiff prudes of the Melbourne Club.

PLAYBOY: Considering your bleak overview of Australian theatre, what purpose does the annual Playwrights' Conference serve?

ELLIS: It puts pressure on those people who are hiding behind the lie that there are no writers worth stimulating. Unfortunately, it's also giving hope to those writers, whose works are done, of getting professional productions elsewhere, and being able to pursue careers as playwrights. The usual sequence is — they get terribly encouraged, much praised and a production of their play presented at the conference. It is treated caustically by the critics, they crawl away wounded, write one more work and find no venue to take it. The net result of the conference has been about 30 aborted playwriting careers. Not the fault of the conference, but a regrettable by-product. There is no easy remedy, except building more theatres in the cities and charging them with putting on original Australian works.

PLAYBOY: The influence of the playwright spreads into other mediums, doesn't it? Williamson's playwriting came before his screenwriting activities. Your screenwriting career came out of theatrical success. In holding back the development of the playwright, are the film and TV industries being denied new talent?

ELLIS: Theatre is a cheap way for a writer to show his strength. Looked at carefully, it's not much dearer than bringing out a book. A $15,000 production in a small theatre, for instance, of a new play — and out of that, so much can come. Out of a rather abrupt little play called *The Removalists* came the glory of *Gallipoli.*

PLAYBOY: Well, where is Australian theatre going in the '80s?

ELLIS: It will get worse and worse, and will never get better. Ever again. But the political situation will probably change dramatically, and there could be another four or five years of renaissance. Theatre, fortunately, doesn't cost all that much. They may well be blackmailed through whatever government Don Chipp allows to function, a deal like that which is so pleasing to film producers — tax deductions for people who invest two bob here and there. The best news is the Sydney Theatre Company's new premises; the worst news is the continued survival of the Melbourne Theatre Company, which is getting $600,000 a year. It doesn't need to bore people shitless with versions of *The Three Sisters,* which would make Chekhov turn in his grave. The middling news is Adelaide, which is vivid and exciting, full of naked women, mime and clowning, experimenting.

PLAYBOY: Have you considered the possibility that we may be entering an era, or are already in it, where theatre is no longer a popular art form?

ELLIS: We are in one way, but not in another. To some extent, we're fighting a class war. For better or for worse, the country we inhabit is largely descended from peasant and working-class stock, with peasant and

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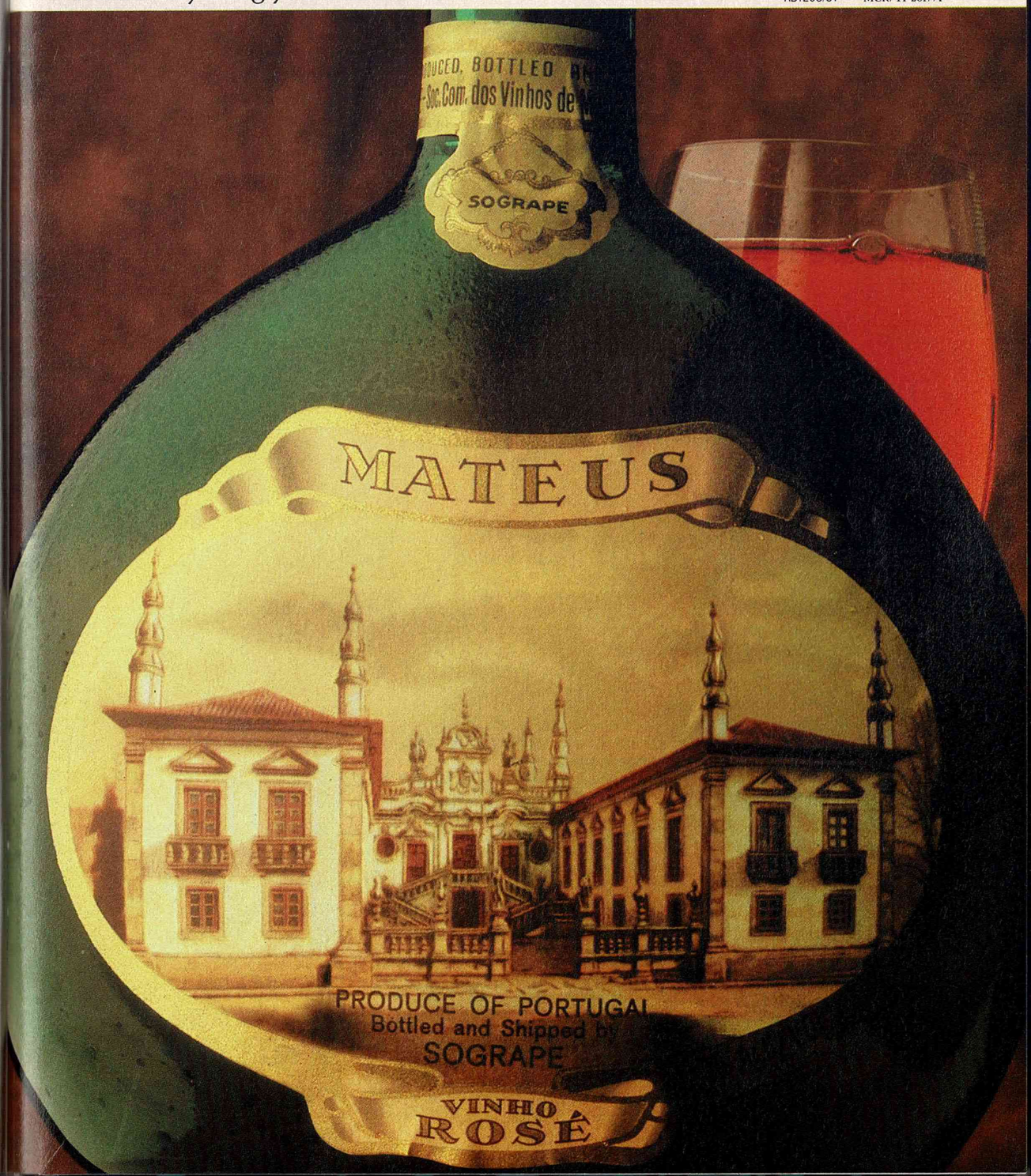

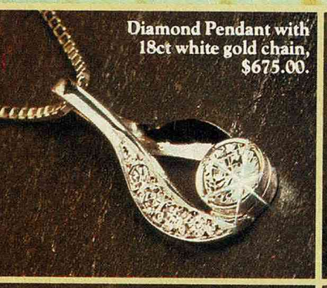

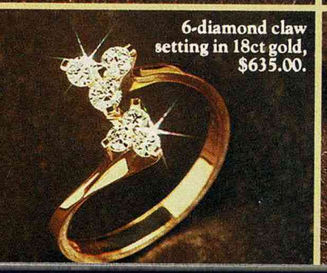

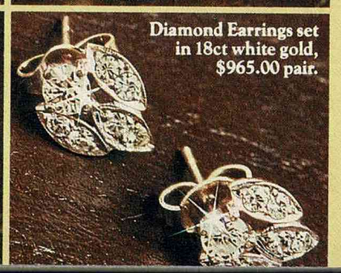

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working-class preoccupations. Superimposed on this is the progeny of a tiny educated middle-class trying to pretend that we are some other kind of country, that our preoccupations should lead us toward posing middle-class comedies like Williamson's and pretentious, ideological, black, tragic farce such as Louis Nowra writes. Not the kind of drama the public manifestly and correctly enjoys, like *Kingswood Country*, the *Paul Hogan Show, The Last Laugh,* and that which comes out of the occasional accidental flashes of good fortune, like *King O'Malley* and *No Room For Dreamers.*

PLAYBOY: I know you see the continual threat of losing our national character or identity as a primary concern, but do you really believe a *Kingswood Country* or the *Paul Hogan Show* serve to keep our identity alive?

ELLIS: Through the domination of American TV from 1956 to 1970, we were told we didn't exist. We knew we existed during the radio days, and with all those *Dad and Daves* and *Martin's Corners* celebrating *us* and having, incidentally, helped win a world war, we felt proud to be what we were. It's the duty of civilisation to tell its people that it *exists* — that's its primary duty — and any amount of subsidies are worth that. The underthread by which we hung all those years from '56 to '70 was probably Graham Kennedy, and God bless him.

PLAYBOY: And we no longer have Graham Kennedy as such?

ELLIS: No, and I think we're in a lot of trouble. We've got a generation who more readily identifies with John Travolta, because you can't fight General Motors. Or the cultural equivalent. I wish Australia had enough sense to embrace, right now, the Scandinavian style of socialism that subsidises the arts and has a certain gratitude for its blessings. I wish we weren't so easily fooled by Sammy nights and tuxedos and gossiping *TV Week*s and game shows. I am appalled that something as valuable as the *Mike Willesee Show* is under threat from something as worthless as *Sale of the Century.* I mourn that the only electorate that matters are the housewives who listen avidly every day to John Laws.

PLAYBOY: Do you think it's fair to say that *Sale of the Century*'s success is due in the main to Tony Barber, just as Mike Willesee's fall from grace has taken current affairs with him?

ELLIS: Well, he got out of his depth and they won't forgive that. He revealed his lack of a sense of humor. Any failing in the hero and people are like a big dog sensing the weakness in the victim, and going for it.

PLAYBOY: This icon-worshipping applies to political leaders, too, does it not — such as the success of the Labor Party in NSW being due to the personality of Neville Wran?

ELLIS: Australians respect most men, across the political spectrum, who exhibit aggressiveness, whether it's a Bjelke-Petersen or a Bolte, Hawke, or Gorton. They are the ones they idolise, and indeed, forgive. And if those men show human failings in a winning way, they adore them. Those people who hide great sections of their personalities and do it in an authoritive way, as did Whitlam, as does Fraser as inanely and hopelessly as Hayden is attempting to do, people will give them enough rope, then tear and bite them to pieces the minute they see them out in the cold. Once again, it's a class war. They will tug and pull for the master as long as the master seems to have undivided power. They will burn down his castle the moment he seems to be ill in bed.

PLAYBOY: As in the case of Willesee?

ELLIS: Exactly. He has many of the same tendencies as the successful but doomed politician, whereas Graham Kennedy, who shows aggression, human failing, impishness, playfulness and childishness, will never be out of public favor because he presents the image of a full human being, and they adore the democracy of that gesture.

PLAYBOY: Is that how Australians want their democracy — as a gesture?

ELLIS: That, I think, is very perceptive. They want a man with whom they can identify as a human being, and want to give him all the power. The man they most want, Hawke, they really have no idea what he believes in or what he would do. They merely like him as a figure who bets on horses and has a drinking problem, is an abrasive negotiator and a realistic conciliator. They don't know what he would do to the country, but they still want him because he *is* them.

PLAYBOY: And here is where the loss of an Australian identity comes in, doesn't it? Because what we are talking about is a very American trait. Hasn't America been built on the star system, from Buffalo Bill to Frank Sinatra, from John F. Kennedy to Ronald Reagan?

ELLIS: It's also been built on the tragedy of female suffrage, which is clearly a mistake and is now too late to rectify. Reagan is in power because his personality was found to be more husbandly and less nervous that that of Carter. The fact that he merely wanted, if necessary, to blow up the world is neither here nor there. It was irrelevant to those women whose votes made the difference. Fraser has a nicer voice than Hayden. That Fraser wants to make the greed of millionaires the basis of our society, and

Hayden wants to make a fair deal the basis, is irrelevant to those who listen to John Laws, who like a nice voice in a man. It's a tragedy women ever got the vote. They are clearly incapable of using it. Mike Walsh could be president on women's votes alone.

PLAYBOY: Do you really believe women have that much power in their votes?

ELLIS: Those who vote and know not why, yes. They vote for Neville Wran, for instance, precisely because they like Mike Walsh, who could be the equivalent of Wran. The fact that Wran is a deeply crafty man who understands that his duty is to play Clark Kent for as long as possible is irrelevant to the fact that they vote for him on grounds that are spurious. He does all those things that titillate women. He has an ambitious second wife who is bright, young and sexy, a daughter who appears in *The Young Doctors*, an engaging inflection in his throat — again the voice. It keeps them worried about him and wanting to look after him. He has a nice profile, and those odd little scandals about whether he dyes his hair. You couldn't manufacture a more pleasing identikit leader for the middle-aged suburban female. It's appalling that a country can go this way. It's plain to anybody who's come from a country town that they are run by women. They let the husbands out like children to go drinking and playing poker machines occasionally, and permit them to come home and give them a black eye. As a rule, the stabilising force of a country town is the women.

PLAYBOY: If what you say is correct, surely sexuality must come into it somewhere along the line?

ELLIS: Those leaders who succeed tend to have this odd quality of sexual confidence. Hawke has it, as does Dunstan. Gorton had it. Wran's got it.

PLAYBOY: What about Whitlam?

ELLIS: He just seems to be out of another century altogether. Francis James said Whitlam reminded him of a great 19th century churchman, and he indeed, initially, wanted to be Archbishop of Canterbury when he was a schoolboy, and James persuaded him toward politics.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel now when you see Whitlam appearing on the TV show *Ratbags?*

ELLIS: Very upset.

PLAYBOY: The theatricality of Whitlam, as you see it, was reinforced the day of his sacking with this "steps of the Forum" element to it. Weren't you a "spear-carrier" yourself that day?

ELLIS: Yes. I was in Parliament House on November 11, 1975, with all this going on, the downfall of the government. Then Norman Gunston arrived on the steps, whereon a sense of unreality and unworthiness came over me. The occasion was so vast and I was so ridiculous. This great Australian "tall poppy-cutting" was going on, and farce and tragedy were congealing about one marble stairway, with Fred Daly crying: "At least in Greece the colonels got into tanks to make the job look difficult!"

PLAYBOY: Then you think the Proscenium Arch that day was the TV screen, with Whitlam playing to it?

ELLIS: Whitlam, who was a university ham at root, very much the Union Night debater, the Union Revue performer in the Noel Coward skits, knew that day what was on, and he came out like Mark Antony doing all his reaction shots, reading over the shoulder of poor little Mr Smith [David Smith, Sir John Kerr's secretary], who was foreclosing Parliament. A very wonderful theory has been asserted about Shakespeare, that all his characters are people inadequate to cope with the roles thrust on them. Hamlet was given the role of revenger and is no good at it; Macbeth the role of regicide and is no good at it; Viola is required to be a boy and is no good at it. And the reason why he resonates so well down the centuries is that we are all in this position. We have roles we cannot play, and we feel inadequate before them. It is a very strong thing, especially in Australia, where inadequacy is the rule and people as preposterous as John Howard are given authority over billions of dollars.

"It's a tragedy women ever got the vote. They are clearly incapable of using it. Mike Walsh could be president on women's votes alone."

PLAYBOY: You look upon the Federal Treasurer then as the perfect Shakespearean figure?

ELLIS: Some have littleness thrust upon them. John Howard and I sat for the same general maths paper, the Leaving Certificate, the same all over New South Wales, and I passed maths for the only time in my life. He failed.

PLAYBOY: Reality does have an essence of farce about it when put into perspective, taking the situation where a man of that position flunks the subject at which he is now required to be most adept.

ELLIS: Farce, tragedy, a comedy of errors. The status that Hawke has is an engaging one, a sympathetic one to do with his theatrical quality. Fraser, Lynch, Sinclair, Anthony — with them it's to do with people's sense of the reality of their power, which includes their money. The status that, say, Rupert Murdoch has is possibly the classic example. The idea is that he is an irresistible force, and although we would cut his throat if we ever got him in a dark alley, we have to play up to him in public because he is *there.* People are very fatalistic in that regard. In *Of Human Bondage,* Somerset Maugham wondered why the poor of England did not swarm across London Bridge and tear down the rich who had made their lives such a misery. The cowardice of the working class is something Fraser, in his one quality of genius, understands and plays on. He knows how far he can go in the torment of his inferiors, and he will probably not go beyond that.

PLAYBOY: Thus the image of Fraser as the schoolmaster, or warder?

ELLIS: That's right. Those silly things he said about not being liked, you must be respected. But it's not really respect so much as a lascivious fear people have of him. He gives their lives a sense of danger.

PLAYBOY: Why is it that what comes through in your perceptions of theatre and politics is a quarrelsome attitude with your country?

ELLIS: I've got a lover's quarrel with Australia, as my fellow countrymen from the old days of *The Bulletin* had. It's unbelievable how much at peace we are, how little we are invaded and atom-bombed and plagued and subject to germ warfare. Unbelievable how much potential we have and how little we do with it. It's appalling that the squatocracy that rules us still has so little culture. The rich, who are beyond believing, are adamant about putting their money into skyscrapers rather than enduring monuments to our nation. It's very sad that we have potentially the wealth of the Indies, and it's in the hands of minds barely fit to run a real estate office. I mourn for the country we might have become had Menzies not got in in 1954, and had there been an equivalent of the BBC TV service dominating Australian airwaves. It could have been truly wonderful.

PLAYBOY: Then you give the BBC credit for much of what English cultural life is today?

ELLIS: It forced people to appreciate quality and raised the average standard so high that when commercial TV was eventually instituted, they were obliged to imitate the BBC. This was unprecedented in all the history of mass media. Newspapers tended to seek the lowest common denominator,

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as did Broadway and radio services in other countries.

PLAYBOY: It's interesting that American TV networks took the lowest common denominator principle down so far that people began to switch off, so they turned to quality to try to persuade viewers back. Is there a seed of hope there?

ELLIS: It may well happen here. *A Town Like Alice* wasn't all that crash hot, but its heart was in the right place, curiously enough because it attempted to be a quality production of a work of literature, along the BBC lines, and it got the highest ratings ever in Australian TV. We may well be looking up, partly through the critical reception our films are getting overseas. I believe it may get better — until I look at the Sammy awards and realise what is really happening.

PLAYBOY: But isn't it true that ABC TV had to emulate commercial TV to try to persuade viewers over?

ELLIS: The reason for this has never been truly stated. People like commercials, not because of what's in them, but because it gives them the opportunity to have a "snakes" or brew a cup of coffee or have some fragments of the family conversations they used to have before TV. If the ABC had more interruptions to their service, they may have done better in the ratings. Also, I think it's true of Australian audiences that those personalities with trained voices repel, where those with untrained voices — Graham Kennedy, Hogan, Willesee — attract. The ABC pitched too high a level with Michael Charlton pomposity, believing there was an Oxford-educated audience out there in their millions, waiting to be served.

PLAYBOY: At a meeting of "concerned" ABC supporters, didn't you voice some scathing opinions about it?

ELLIS: After working there for seven years, I had some insight into the place. I was aware that most people in the ABC holding important positions were Englishmen, and while this wouldn't necessarily disqualify them from office, they were as a rule pale Englishmen — some sackees from *Z-Cars* and Yorkshire TV, all congealed into this officers' mess from which they shut out reality and drank heavily. So I wasn't complimentary.

PLAYBOY: ABC drama even today has that Cadbury Roses chocolate air about it. The drama does not tackle Australia, 1980s. Aren't we being drawn back to this question of politics/arts/economics giving TV the benefit of the doubt in referring to it as "art"?

ELLIS: Since the demise of Whitlam, there has been a slow and steady repression of our freedom of speech in this country, and part of the reason why the ABC has gone downhill is because those people who cannot bear it have got out, and those mediocrities which have been there forever have finally achieved their level of total incompetence. Since Fraser came to office, the ABC's budget has been cut by close to 30 percent, and the commissioners and management have become aware that the reason is because they run current affairs on radio and TV in which the prevailing government view is occasionally challenged. If they stopped running these programs, they'd get a whole lot more money. They cannot be seen to yield, but in fact do. There is no longer a *Monday Conference* or *This Day Tonight,* and the news budget is down so far as to prevent them from actually interviewing a politician on the matter. As in all banana republics, the repression increases in direct proportion to the incompetence of the government in power. The Fraser Government is neurotic, greedy, chaotic and indecisive, and as a result, it fears all those independent organs of opinion. We're dealing with a government that is self-righteous about its electoral fraudulence, sort of "How dare you believe we were going to keep our promises?" And, "What kind of people do you think we are?" Any organ that reflected this reality is simply absurd. When they have the power to repress mightily, I see no end to this government. I hasten to add that it would not be true of a Peacock Government or a Killen Government.

PLAYBOY: The ABC aside, there was, for a brief time in the early '70s, an "independent organ" quite open in opinion. I refer, of course, to *Nation Review.* It brought together a band of enlightened journalists in a grand gesture at impartiality, but ultimately went under. The accepted theory has been that the paper served a function, to get Labor in, and when they were ousted, that function was seen to be negated. You know, why bother?

ELLIS: Surely that was the time when it was most needed? It has always been my belief that a civilised nation's first duty is to subsidise the writing of biographies and their publication, and unless things are put down in print that have happened to a nation, and its most important people in ways which don't have the life squeezed out of them, as they do in most Australian journalism, you don't believe you actually exist.

PLAYBOY: And with *Nation Review,* people believed?

ELLIS: Until they felt betrayed — from the point when, against Richard Walsh's wishes, he was forced to amalgamate with *The Living Daylights.* It became a burdensome memory every Sunday, and people compared what it was with what it became, and they stopped reading. People buy magazines to be what they are. I attribute its demise largely to Walsh, and I don't go along with the line of opinion that once Whitlam was in, its function was over. Nothing of the sort. It was just badly managed.

PLAYBOY: The interesting aspect of *Nation Review* was the mix of journalists — Hepworth, Beckett, McCallum — and the way your personal lives crept into each other's writing.

ELLIS: A very honored form of journalism, really. Dickens wrote travel books which were very much part of his private reactions. It's absurd to assume that journalists, of all people, have some God-like vision they can divorce from their private weaknesses and drunkennesses. They may as well admit it up front. It's also more attractive as writing. If you went up on the street and asked somebody to name five people who write for *The National Times,* they couldn't because they have no impression of them, because of the way they write.

PLAYBOY: In some ways, the *Nation Review* had elements of the glorious days of *The Bulletin.*

ELLIS: Yes. And *Smith's Weekly.*

PLAYBOY: *Smith's Weekly* also died along the way and *The Bulletin* became something else.

ELLIS: Well, here we're into the large topic of the disloyalty of the Left. *Nation Review* died because the Left did not believe it was worth 60 cents a week to keep it going, to keep a forum from which opinion could be freely expressed, alive. they are as silly as that.

PLAYBOY: Where is that forum for the Left now?

ELLIS: It doesn't exist, as such. It's diffused through bits of *The National Times* and bits of magazines, but there's no one publication, in the same way as there's no one pub where that kind of opinion can gather and be heard. And it's desperately needed.

PLAYBOY: You've had an on-going battle of mouth and conscience with the Australian film industry since the production of your first screenplay, *Newsfront.* What's behind that?

ELLIS: I wrote 10 drafts in what amounted to a full spirit of co-operation with the producer and director, and the ninth was good enough to get the money to make the film. They then, after promising not to do so, got another writer in behind my back to do cuts. These included scenes I regarded as vital — like an Irish/Australian family at Christmas, which

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among other things established that the two central characters were brothers, not simply acquaintances. They left out Bradman's last Test, the Queen's first visit, and the ending, in which the [Bill] Hunter character wins a prize for his coverage of the incident at the Olympics, and it's worthless. When I saw the film, it just seemed it was not as I had designed it, as a movie of the whole moral history of the nation over the era. It had been whittled down to its politics and had been deprived of about 45 percent of its laughs, and I was angry. I got into an altercation with David Elfick, the producer, and in the heat of the moment, told him I was taking my name off of it. I regretted it immediately, but stuck by it. When, to my absolute astonishment, it started going down well, it seemed I'd done the wrong thing. That's when I tried desperately to see some way of getting back on the bandwagon.

PLAYBOY: In retrospect, how do you feel about the film today?

ELLIS: It's pretty good, but only two-thirds of what if ought to be. It's boring and very disjointed because of what was cut out, though it does have going for it the miracle of black and white and authentic images of times. It does not have a lasting power of, say, *Breaker Morant* or *The Chant Of Jimmy Blacksmith.* In a few years, it will be looked at as an interesting failure. An accidental success.

PLAYBOY: And *Fatty Finn?*

ELLIS: I knew that was a success when I saw it over a flask of whisky, despite being badly done — terrible sound, the acting was mostly indifferent and I didn't know whether to take my name off it. Strangely enough, the original flavor survived. A strange mixture of Australian capitalism and mateship, vigor and vulgarity, sportsmanship and honor and family name.

PLAYBOY: Of the three films produced to date from your writing, which one are you happiest with?

ELLIS: I have to say *Newsfront,* I'm afraid. The performances were what they should have been and the visual style was excellent. The smell of the period was right.

PLAYBOY: Let's go back to Sydney University. In retrospect, you were in some pretty illustrious company then, weren't you?

ELLIS: Yes, but none of us knew it at the time. There was Robert Hughes, Germaine Greer, Les Murray, John Bell, Ken Horler, Arthur Dignam, Clive James, Richard Neville and Richard Walsh, Richard Brennan, Bruce Beresford, John Gayden, Mr Justice Kirby, a close friend, Stephen Wallace, Jim Spigeleman — in all, about 40 of them who went on to finer things, and we all avoided one another and drank coffee at different tables and didn't mix.

PLAYBOY: The initial urge to write, did that come out of university?

ELLIS: No, much earlier. I had a teacher in fifth class when I was 10 who made us do what amounted to a novel — a series of compositions which added up to a total narrative called *Journey To The South Seas.* I made my piece a dinosaur hunt and such was the response from the headmaster, that I began to write short stories for the *Women's Weekly* at the age of 10 in longhand. They were returned unpublished, but I got hooked and kept doing it. I was a fairly lonely and articulate kid, and began to write 38-page letters to young women then 10 and 11. Subsequently, I became the editor of the high school magazine, and by the time I went to university, I ended up on *Honi Soit.*

PLAYBOY: University '59 must have been a different world to that of today. One has images of the "beat generation" and all that.

ELLIS: There was a certain strangeness to it, I suppose. By blind accident, I advertised for a roommate and acquired Les Murray, and he introduced me to a lot of other "different" people. We used to have quarrels over hygiene. Murray never washed and would spread butter on his bread with his thumb, things like that. He introduced me to Mike Malloy, who eventually shot *Barry Lyndon* for Kubrick, and I would hang around Cinesound Studios while they they were making educational documentaries, and so on.

PLAYBOY: You had the acting bug back then, for a while?

ELLIS: I'd joined the Sight 'n' Sound Players. There was a production of *Twelfth Night* in which Beresford and I played the 1st and 2nd officers in ill-fitting Restoration tights, and my erection became the the most famous feature of the chorus line of that production. Possibly my acting career. We did the very first Pinter in Australia, and I began, at the age of 18, to perfect my line in withered old men. Of course, nobody had ever seen Pinter before, and everybody was astonished at how it was both menacing and funny at the same time. We toured to Tasmania, where I met Michael Boddy, so I presume that one production is directly responsible for Australian theatre.

PLAYBOY: What kind of chap were you in those days?

ELLIS: Pretty disorientated, I suppose. I would always get the wrong train and wind up God-knows-where, and find myself sitting on park benches being beset by homosexuals and not knowing what the hell was going on. I

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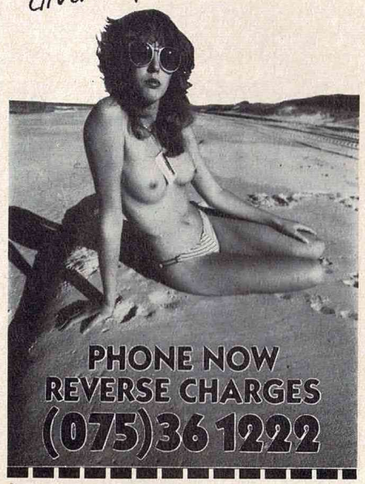

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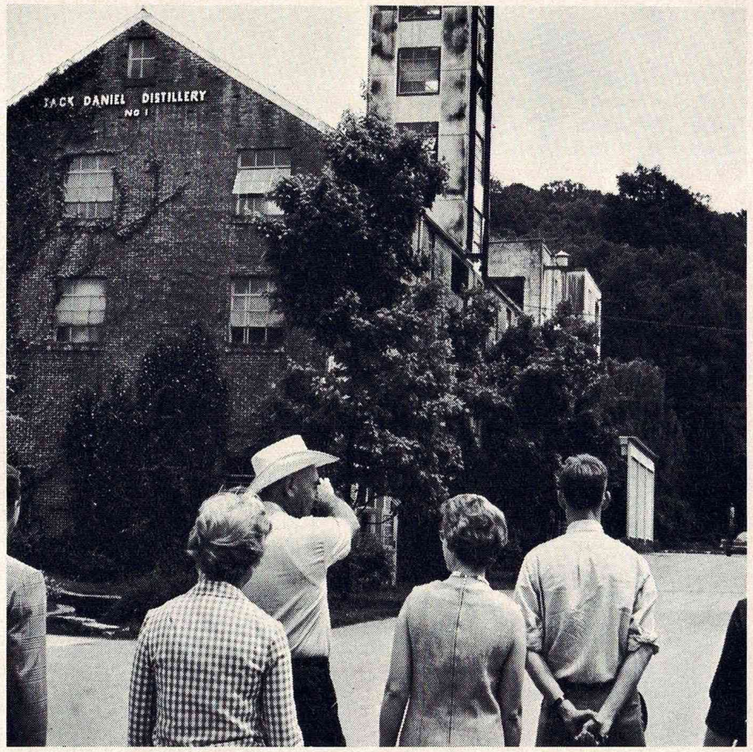

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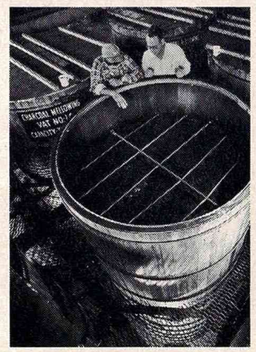

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still kept going to church, pursuing the Seventh Day Adventist ethic, until the then president of the Sydney University Seventh Day Adventist Society abruptly resigned and became a drag queen in Kings Cross. I had a strong libido, and chased women in all directions, got into awful trouble. For cultural, environmental reasons, I did not wash or clean my teeth between 1960 and 1964 and often, for reasons I did not then understand, attracted women because of this. Women like to take you home and wash and iron you. Also I strongly believe that there is an odor content in sexual attraction which is not admitted. This is why extremely filthy people like me and Dylan Thomas always get treated well by women.

PLAYBOY: Was that the start of the building of the Ellis "myth"?

ELLIS: Possibly. I was like I was supposed to be, though I am supposed to be quite a lot.

PLAYBOY: You perceived yourself in this one image?

ELLIS: Oh, yes — as a kind of squalid little sort of raving rodent struggling for advantage. I became famous for my filthiness, wearing a big black coat which would stand up on its own. I used to wash in the Uni shower with my socks on to save the trouble of washing them separately. I had this trick at a meeting, where I was the arch representative, and I'd go out in the middle of it, have a shower and come back wringing wet and gesticulating and flinging water at everybody. Michael Kirby was usually president of these meetings in those days.

PLAYBOY: That's Mr Justice Kirby, of the Law Reform Commission now?

ELLIS: Yes. Very tolerant. We corresponded for years. I also had some tendency to climb in windows and go up walls. A couple of times, I nearly fell to my death, but by some inspired miracle, I would get back in to whatever building I'd been locked out of. I used to climb up the walls of perfect strangers' houses, sit on the windowsill and listen to conversations, then crawl down again. I was excellent at going up vertically, drainpipes and things. And the way many country boys did, I would always revert to Central Railway, where I'd hang around and occasionally meet somebody I knew from Lismore, and have a miserable conversation about how they were getting on and having a hard time of it. I had a disorderly attitude to study, and one year broke the pub pool record instead of doing my anthropology exam.

PLAYBOY: What was the political environment like among this circle of future creative achievers?

ELLIS: It was apolitical. There was no-

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body entering politics at all. There were a few things they cared about — but then, it was still customary for women to at least pretend to be virgins and obligatory for them to wear dresses. A lot of coffee was drunk, libertarianism was adored — and so were Peter Ustinov, Peter Sellers and Oscar Wilde.

PLAYBOY: Did you have any view then where you were headed, what was your aim in life?

ELLIS: I knew I wanted to be a writer. I wanted to also be an actor and film director. A greater world had become visible to me one night when I met Col Joye and he was nice to me. I couldn't believe that such people even spoke to people like me, and started dropping names furiously in my letters home, lying in my teeth, inventing stories I had to live up to. Many things got in the way of ambition.

PLAYBOY: Writing obviously took preference, though?

ELLIS: Yes, I was writing for *Honi Soit,* starting out with this thing called *The Serial,* where known nursery rhymes and children's stories were done in various literary styles. I did P.G. Wodehouse and Dylan Thomas, Shakespeare and so on. The practice stood me in good stead, I think. I still write in different styles. *Goodbye Paradise* is written precisely like Chandler, and the film Phillip Adams is producing about those years of my life, called *The Nostradamus Kid,* is exactly like a Truffaut film.

PLAYBOY: There was a quick career jump at *Honi Soit,* wasn't there?

ELLIS: At *Honi Soit,* I became involved in the discontent under the editorship of Richard Walsh, and engineered his sacking one night, much to everyone's surprise. I eventually had put in his place me and Laurie Oakes. I was a powerful man, and quickly fell into the ways of Rupert Murdoch. In a matter of months, I became a tycoon. I held long monologues in the office and bored everybody stiff. I also overspent the budget by about five thousand pounds — a fortune in those days — and correctly resigned.

PLAYBOY: There was an incident where the printers of *Honi Soit, The Sydney Morning Herald,* ceased to handle it. What brought that about?

ELLIS: I wrote an article in which I gave a perfect technical description of an abortion, and *The Herald* could stand no more, and threw us out of their printery. At a loss for a printer, I consulted the phone book and the first one listed was the Anglican Press. I phoned, and Francis James answered. As usual, he was bankrupt, but we came to a deal by which he got the contract for *Honi Soit,* and I took a job as editor of the Anglican Yearbook. I became the resident Bible scholar. Bishops would come in, and we'd have this game by which they would name a book, chapter and verse of the Bible, and I'd quote it word perfect, which I could do in those days.

PLAYBOY: You were raised on Seventh Day Adventism, which seemed to haunt you through your 20s — then a turnaround on religion all together. What happened to change your way of thinking?

ELLIS: Well, it goes back to my grandfather, who brought it to the north coast after being converted out of dedicated alcoholism in the early part of the century. It certainly stranded me at 19 nowhere in particular except for the great uncertainty I have not yet quite overcome. You need some emotional security to get by in the big world, specially in the big city when you come from elsewhere. You see, I grew up believing (a) the end of the world was nigh, (b) that Noah's flood was real, (c) that every word in the Bible was correct, and (d) that I was one of the chosen people and was heading for a time of persecution by the Catholics, who would put a brand on my forehead and torture me endlessly without being able to kill me, because of God's intervention — before Christ and 10,000 of his saints came storming down the corridors of Orion to whisk us away to heaven for a thousand years, and back to earth for the final great battle with Satan and Henry the Eighth and every lascivious bastard arrayed against us, at the end of which, they would all be wiped out and cast into a lake of fire in the new Jerusalem — and we would all live happily ever after. Free loving, I am pleased to say, but no alcohol; eating the fruit of the tree of life, drinking from the waters of the river of life and saying "Holy, Holy, Holy," to God and his bloody throne, day in and day out, and not getting bored. It sounded a bit implausible after a while, but was received by me as the absolute truth when young.

PLAYBOY: So where did the change in attitude come from?

ELLIS: My sister was run over by a car and killed when she was 22, and there didn't seem to be any great point in that. My mother's theory was that she was off in the big city and learning the ways of sin, so God took her just in time before she was doomed to hellfire by her sinful ways, and that worried me.

PLAYBOY: To the point where you can no longer take religion seriously?

ELLIS: Not at all, and perhaps that is a failing in me. It seems to me that once there were certain cavemen and they had a lot of children, and one of the children died. One of the others asked: "Where has she gone?" and so they made up this story about this lovely place where they would all go and meet her eventually, and the child believed it and passed it on, and religion grew that way. It seems so obvious to me, now I've got children, that's the way it happened. You can't accept any God who will countenance the death of a child. That's all.

PLAYBOY: The Anglican Press figured prominently in one of the more ludicrous trials of the 1960s — that of *Oz* magazine and the Anglican Press, as its printer. What happened?

ELLIS: Feeling unemployed, Walsh went out and founded *Oz,* and since he

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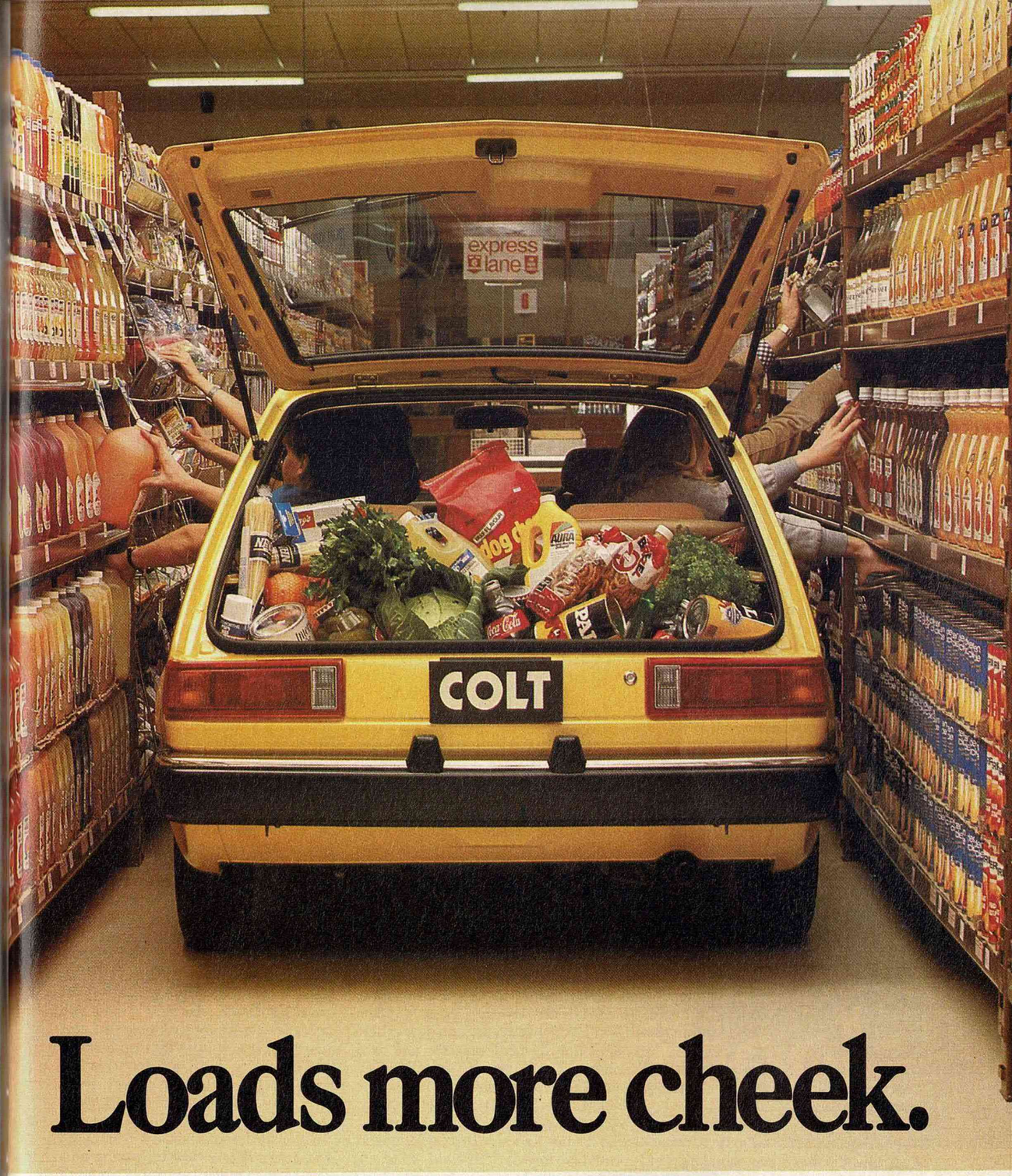

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needed a printer, I recommended James. As a direct result of this, the Anglican board of directors, comprising four bishops and James, were eventually arraigned for obscenity in a preposterous trial.

PLAYBOY: They were represented, incidentally, by an impressive firm of solicitors, weren't they?

ELLIS: Yes, St John, Murphy, Wran and Kerr. When I wrote my musical, *The James Dossier,* on Francis James, Bishop Moyes says to James in it: "Who are our lawyers, Francis? I am worried how it will go." James replies: "St John, Murphy, Wran and Kerr, my Lord," to which Moyes says: "Yes, but are they any good?"

PLAYBOY: What was the outcome of the trial?

ELLIS: They were acquitted, and a flood of pornography and licence took over our nation and destroyed its moral fibre — I presume. I haven't noticed. It was ridiculous, of course. I remember being there one day when Morris West was on the stand, and the defence lawyer said: "Take this pun 'get folked', Mr West. Is there literary merit in that pun, would you say?" And West said: "Oh, yes sir, lots of literary merit, not only in the pun itself but in the surrounding caligraphy." Bloody ridiculous.

PLAYBOY: As was to happen with *Nation Review* in later years, *Oz* peaked, then filtered away.

ELLIS: *Oz* was started soon after *Private Eye,* with much the same mandate. Then it fell athwart the Kennedy assassination, which it dared to treat in a comic way. Of course, it was a bit revolting and not very funnily done. People found it a bit over the top, a bit scabrous. Under Walsh, the layout became worse and the rates of pay less, as happened in the case of *Nation Review.* It eventually dwindled down to a hard core of clerical incompetence and Neville and Sharp went to Katmandu in search of other things.

PLAYBOY: Then on to London to found *Oz II* and face yet another infamous obscenity trial?

ELLIS: I think of Neville as following Yeats' theory of Gyres — getting back to the same point.

PLAYBOY: For all the pitfalls, there was a period back in the early 1960s when Australia did have the semblance of satire — *Oz,* the *Mavis Bramston Show,* the Phillip Street Revue. Now there is no such movement.

ELLIS: It seems you can have satire when you don't have politics. Australia had satire but no politics in those days. There was a crucial point at which I was witness, where *This Day Tonight* was being founded. The argument was whether it should be of general interest content, with lots of satire, or a hard-nosed current affairs program. It came down to be a hard-nosed current affairs show. I knew at the time that it was a mistake. Politics is all we have now, and a lot of joy is gone.

PLAYBOY: How effective was the watershed of creativity out of Sydney University of the late 1950s?

ELLIS: It was once said of American literature that, for writers, there are no third acts. In Australia, for the creative person, there are hardly any second acts. People gain some small reputation as writers of journalism or short stories, or they make one or two films or write a play or two, then pack it in and retire on their laurels or become critics or grand old men or administrators in the ABC.

PLAYBOY: They attain success, but possibly never realise their potential?

ELLIS: I think so. Germaine Greer is by far the most intelligent Australian woman I have known but she is a one-book writer. She could have been a playwright, screenwriter, novelist — anything else as well. She certainly could have been a considerable actress or singer. She did what she was fairly good at, which was inventing a few phrases and then popularising them through her charm, but there should have been more to her career. Much more. She had the potential to be a female George Bernard Shaw, and she has become just another Tuscan guru. It will ever be the glory of Don Dunstan that he has gone beyond his particular medical tragedy and into another career as an excellent TV journalist. He is going on; few people do that. They hit the first setback and pack it in. We have lost Fred Schepisi, who is by far our finest filmmaker, probably forever. He will wind up making hillbilly movies for vast sums of money in return for a great American apathy for the rest of his life, unless he comes to his senses. There are no second acts.

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PLAYBOY: And you?

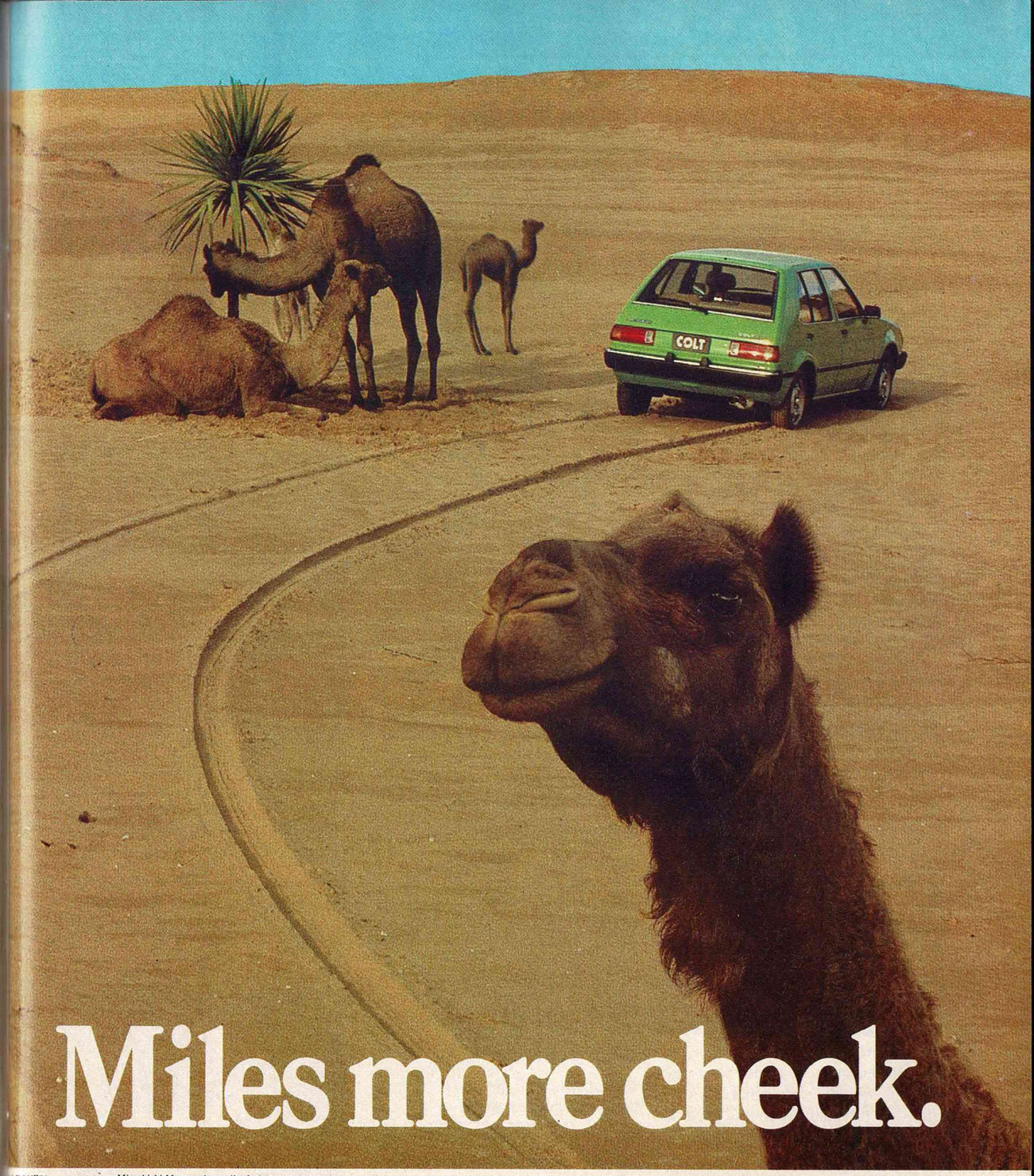
ELLIS: I would very much like to have been an actor, to inhabit at least that kind of space inhabited by, say Dustin Hoffman or Woody Allen. Every time I give a speech — which I always write in great detail and deliver with great verve — I get an audience response such as I don't get anywhere else. A personal charge. It is a thing I do best and would very much like to have an audience. I would like to do a one-man show and sing and all that.

PLAYBOY: The impression that comes across is that, in many ways, you *are* an actor. There is this character called Ellis, then there is Bob Ellis the writer, supplying lines for Ellis the character, and another Ellis doing this public relations job, going out and drumming up all this media coverage to spread the "myth" of Ellis. Is that fairly accurate?

ELLIS: Yes. There is a kind of routine by which I arrive unshaven and badly dressed, at a meeting or an occasion attended by the Prime Minister of the day. Altercations take place and they are subsequently regenerated for my humorous columns.

PLAYBOY: Which in turn have generated verbal altercations in the letters columns of the magazine or paper for which you are writing at the time. I refer to the notorious "Ellis-Williamson" exchange in 1977 through *Nation Review,* and the verbal run-in with John Pilger back in 1971. What was that all about?

ELLIS: Pilger came to Australia with his film, *The Quiet Mutiny,* about American soldiers in Vietnam refusing to go to war any more. Nobody would show it. I viewed it, did a couple of articles in praise of it, made Phillip Adams watch it and he wrote in praise of it also. We managed to put it on and a few people came to hear Pilger give a talk. Later that year, I was in London and Pilger approached me, having seen *King O'Malley* at my behest, to collaborate with him on writing a musical about war correspondents. It seemed an excellent idea. I knew nothing about war correspondents, so he said: "You'd better come with me to Bangladesh." With great reluctance, because I had two tickets to see Laurence Olivier in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* on a clashing date, we took off for this far country, where to my horror three days later, full war broke out! I was stuck in the Grand Hotel in Calcutta with every famous war correspondent who immediately flew in, posing as a war correspondent myself. I couldn't get the necessary papers to go to the battlefront, which you got to, by the way, by taxi from the front door of the Grand Hotel, for about two weeks. Eventually, I went out with Pilger one day, on my own another day. Such was the state of the Calcutta telephone service in wartime that they would often ring you abruptly at 4am to tell you your call had been unsuccessful



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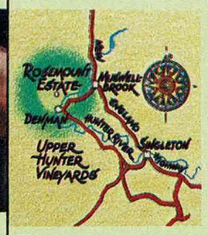

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and they wouldn't be putting you through, thereby waking you. What came over the phone in Melbourne in my dispatch to *Nation Review* was a very garbled thing of which they typed what they could understand. The effect of it was to mix together the events of two days — one with Pilger, one on my own. Pilger assumed I was telling a pack of lies. I also went to the extreme of quoting some of his semi-racist remarks regarding the Indians, which he didn't like, and he was deeply — and perhaps correctly — upset. I did in fact put some words into his mouth he never said. Poetic excess which I didn't know lay outside the parameters of professional journalism, being then a beardless 29.

PLAYBOY: Have you learnt since that there is a certain form of ethic in journalism that really does need to be adhered to?

ELLIS: Needs to be resisted, I think. This was the most extraordinary thing that had ever happened to me. I had never been to war before, and it really did wonders for my John Bunyan 17th century-style prose and when it came to the moment of the great soliloquy, I wasn't going to let mere facts stop me from putting words into Pilger's mouth. I've since realised it was an annoyance to him, but the case is not particularly proven, seeing what other war correspondents did with material they were handed. Quite often, there were accounts of burning villages and severed hands given in hand-outs from the press officers in the War Department, when they hadn't happened at all.

PLAYBOY: You have been a witness to that kind of distorted journalism then, have you?

ELLIS: Yes, and the brunt of the articles was about that, too. There were alarming incidents of people being strafed and imprisoned for 40 years and being let out after two days.

PLAYBOY: It does have the ring of something straight out of *M*A*S*H* but there is an absurdity of war where black comedy goes hand-in-hand with the horror-surrealistic element.

ELLIS: Once you're there, right in the middle of it, it's quite extraordinary. I saw a truckload of strangely smiling Indians going off under the full moon into battle. They believed in reincarnation, and it was probably an exciting day ahead whether they died or not. They didn't care. Being Indians and Pakistanis, they all went to the same military school, and had some respect for propriety, so they knocked off war for lunch between twelve and one. Under these becalmed cannons, a belated journalist arrived with a tape recorder, saying: "Look, I need a background for my report. Can you just fire off a few rounds?" Money changed hands and a few rounds were duly fired, and no doubt men eating peanut butter sandwiches five miles away were blown to bits in order to provide this journalist with background sounds.

PLAYBOY: These columns you write, are they part of some frustration to continually prove to yourself that despite the "noise", Bob Ellis really *does* exist?

ELLIS: It is not something I'm proud of. I achieved at some point, a position not unlike that of Norman Gunston, as a kind of court jester with an ever-diminishing circle of acquaintances and friends. I got into a kind of noisome habit of doing it, though I have never been very good at it, and I am always trying to improve it. My idols in prose are various, and include Evelyn Waugh and Lennie Lower, and comic writing about factual events is something that should be attempted

"As in all banana republics, repression increases in direct proportion to the incompetence of the government in power."

in the tragic era. I can sort of do it, and the fact that I can't do it as well as I would like drives me to do it badly over and over again. I really must stop, because I don't like myself when I do it, and neither does anybody else. The kind of posturing pipsqueak that comes out of it, I recognise as not altogether me, and certainly one who's not worth prolonging.

PLAYBOY: The rodent you perceived yourself as from your university days has metamorphosised into this "posturing pip-squeak"?

ELLIS: Precisely the same role as the medieval court jester, with a great deal of charm and precision and success, because he is a superb deliverer of his own material. I don't have that advantage, and I have to do it on the page, which is occasionally inflicted by typists who get words wrong, and sub-editors who cut the subtleties out, so you can go down screaming. I don't believe that anything less than dangerous writing is worth doing. For instance, Phillip Adams is a safe writer — desperately safe. He drives you mad with his safety. He is mental Musak. You have to be way out on the edge like Milligan is and Humphries is and Evelyn Waugh and Kingsley Amis are. Each joke is a small act of revolution, or it is not a good joke. So you have to be constantly causing offence or you may as well give up. I have rubbed along in the far corners of the footlights for so long as to yearn a bit to be utterly unknown, and not watched. I hate the burden of having to be funny or eccentric upon demand all the time.

PLAYBOY: You're like the condemned man who builds his own scaffold, then places the noose around his neck?

ELLIS: Absolutely. You have to be very, very careful. Fitzgerald said: "Personality is a series of successful gestures." You have to be very careful what those successful gestures are, or you can get smothered by them.

PLAYBOY: To move for a moment from the personal to the larger canvas, how would you sum up your feelings about Australia today?

ELLIS: This is the only agnostic country that ever existed. Religion does not loom large — despite the monuments to it. It is a country built on despair and yearning for the green regions of before; on hatred of warders; of imprisonment; on a need for rum. It is a country built on a lack of women, on the ultimate miserable group which is the Aborigines, and their necessary murder. A country built on enormous distant aloneness, like both sides of the moon. Above all, a country built on a sense of acknowledged and undisputed failure — even the governor. A country built on grants, land grants, on selections, on government largesse, out of which people made their pile. The least capitalistic country of all. No one was a self-made man in Australia — they got their licences, their grants, subsidies and tariffs. A dependence on the warder for breakfast while hating him at the same time. It was pretty screwed up country.

PLAYBOY: Can you take it seriously any more?

ELLIS: How can you? In the end, the poor are not being schooled and the old are eating cats' meat and going to unhonored graves. Families are breaking up and cities are breaking down because of foolish, posturing, public school boys who never got out of the attitude of the school debate, never touched reality, even fleetingly.

PLAYBOY: Given your bleak vision of where we came from and where we are, what motivates you to continue?

ELLIS: I find the best motivation is crippling debt, the only one that keeps me going. Dr Johnson's remark that nobody but a blockhead ever wrote for anything but money, rings true.

Photography by John O'Gready, courtesy of John Fairfax and Sons

MATES!

Just when you thought you knew who your mates were, along comes another new set of rules to undermine your friendships. How well does the "mates-is-mates" logic survive when it seems that everybody is out to give your true-blue china the chop? Feature by Neil Jameson

SMACKA AND TERRY had spent a lot of time in each other's company. They were mates, and had been close since that first summer holiday their families had spent at Lakes Entrance when the boys were 12. The next year, Terry's dad had to work, so Smacka stayed home, too, and the boys spent the six weeks building tin canoes to sail in the stormwater drain, reclining on the embankment and throwing stones at goods trains.

At 15, they made the joint decision to quit school the following year. When Smacka missed the grading cut for the senior district football trial, Terry said they'd have more time to spend on other things, and to the amazement of the coach, quit the game, too.

They were sitting in the beer garden of the Vauxhall in 1968 the day the local paper published their birth dates among the listing for national service draftees. The night before the medical, they got outrageously pissed with the Vauxhall crew, and between closing time and 3am, played Alice's Restaurant almost a dozen times and smoked the best part of a deal of Queensland heads.

Next day they looked, smelt and felt like garbage, but it didn't help because the quack gave Terry the green light in every category. Smacka knew one whisper of the leg he shattered in the bike accident three years before would allow him to beat it. A short while later, he was sitting next to Terry on the train ride to Singleton training camp, wondering why he hadn't spoken up during the medical. Their final fling in the name of freedom was a nostalgic surfing sojourn up the coast. Old breaks, good waves, a brawl in a Taree pub — it was just like old times. Terry pulled a stunning waitress in Coffs Harbor, but let the chance slide when Smacka struck out with her mate.

They spent the following Christmas in Nui Dat, Vietnam, with Smacka in artillery and Terry in the infantry. But Smacka wrangled a transfer to the foot-sloggers a fortnight before they were shipped to Vung Tau, and exactly 26 days before he caught some metal high in the left chest cavity while pulling a wounded forward scout out of a VC ambush. The brass were certain Smacka was going to die, so they plugged for a gong, and when approval came through, everybody was amazed he was still hanging on.

The company jive was that he'd go home a hero, drink free piss in the

RSL forever and probably never have to work again. They were wrong, and everybody said he was crazy when he signed on for a second tour of duty and requested a transfer back to "Vungers". But he got it, and arrived four days after Terry had suffered bad burns to the arms and legs while helping clobber a grass fire which threatened a fuel supply. Smacka's hero status gave him a lot of free rein, so he spent a good slice of his time hanging around the medical station while Terry recovered. Soon after, the pair of them, lean and jaded from their ordeals, scored R-and-R in Saigon.

The day they returned to base, Smacka told Terry he was thinking of marrying the petite hostess who had shared his bed for three of the five nights in Saigon. It was Terry who learned that she wasn't a schoolteacher like she claimed. And she wasn't a country girl who had lost her family in the fighting, also like she claimed. He got through to the US military police in Saigon, and an officer there said she was a prostitute with strong underworld contacts, and was already married to a marine supplies sergeant who'd been busted for pushing forces stores through the black market.

Terry thought long and hard about how to break the news to Smacka, but when the time came, it wasn't any easier. Smacka would have hit anybody else, but he believed Terry, and though they hardly spoke for a whole week after the event, it was apparent the experience had forged an even stronger bond between them.

"The fishing was incidental to the mood of relaxing, enjoying each other's company and the knowledge that the water separated them from the everyday headache of meeting mortgage payments."

They bailed out of the army in 1970 and gave themselves just long enough to flash their short haircuts at the Vauxhall, turn their respective bankrolls in for traveller's cheques, and grab a fast plane to Bali on the first leg of an international surfing odyssey. They left a few friends drinking in the bar at the international terminal, and it was Gary Murray who remarked on the tightness of the Terry-Smacka friendship.

"Couldn't separate those blokes with a crowbar," he said.

"You don't think national service turned 'em a bit queer, do you?" ventured Phil Carpenter.

The rest swivelled as one, but it was Gary who got in first: "Those two? Not bloody likely."

And everybody laughed.

Hawaii, the US mainland, France, Portugal, Spain and two-and-a-half years were behind them when South Africa and Sandra appeared on the horizon. They were sharing a house in Durban with four other people and she had the front bedroom. It took Terry a full three months to find his way into her bed, and he was more than a little stunned and challenged by her strong will, independence and, perhaps most of all, her burning sexuality.

Smacka kept his distance, but soon found he was spending more of his surfing, drinking and carousing hours by himself. He knew the wind was starting to turn, and one Friday afternoon suggested it might be a good idea to think about heading home while they still had cash for the air fare. It was then Terry mentioned England, and Smacka stopped himself from saying: "But there's bugger-all surf in England" because he sensed how much Sandra had entered the scheme of things.

When a big day at Jeffereys Bay cost Smacka three broken ribs and the sack after taking time off work to recover, he decided his last chance for a comfortable exit was fast disappearing. So he purchased an SAA ticket without telling Terry, and sat on the news till two days before departure. Terry and Sandra insisted on taking the day off and driving him to the airport in the old VW Kombi. They drank a sad beer, and Sandra snapped a shot of Smacka giving Terry one big bear hug just outside the terminal gate. When Smacka walked through that gate, the partnership found its inevitable fork in the road. They've not seen each other since, but Smacka received a card last Christmas from Toronto, Canada, where Terry and Sandra now live with their two kids. Inside was the Durban airport departure snap with the simple inscription on the back: Mates.

These sorts of associations aren't rare. Scratch the psyche of the average Aussie male and you'll find that through experience or observation, he knows what such a relationship entails. However, just how many will readily admit to it without a sign of cynicism is the real X factor, because these days mateship isn't the popular institution it once was. Oh, it's still alive and kicking, but in an almost covert fashion. Just like SP bookmaking — there are plenty of punters, but not all are willing to admit to it.

Somehow, we've inherited and refined a society which has pushed mateship underground, reducing it to the pursuit of those who run the risk of being labelled "queer". Mateship's fall might have started with the coining of that monumental catch-phrase "latent homosexuality". In plotting the demise of mateship, the feminist movement will find few greater weapons than the old LH tag. Though now superseded, it bears as much importance in its theatre of conflict as the Molotov cocktail did in Hungary in 1956. So simple in its beauty to exploit the basic male fear that being labelled queer was akin to contracting leprosy, LH had the desired effect of making mateship abnormal and men watchdogs over their own company.

Naturally, the media psychologists had the perfect item to fill the void. "Now men have room to explore and pursue more meaningful relationships with their wives and girlfriends," they preached. Now, that sounded fine, but at the other end of the scale, nobody was doing the sums on how mateship's decline contrasted remarkably with a soaring divorce rate.

Overuse has snapped latent homosexuality's potency as a belittling ploy, but it has spawned the equally damning "macho", a fiendishly clever device with a hip vagueness guaranteed to discomfort the accused. If you don't believe it, try going to your office on Monday and telling Ms Nina T. Five (BA, PhD) that you spent the weekend beering-on with the boys and bagging Viv Richards from the heights of the SCG Hill. You'd get the "Really-Roger-don't-you-think-that's-a-bit-macho?" routine and everybody would snigger at the putdown. And when the boys ask whether you'll be backing up for the next Test match, you just might try to find a good reason to decline.

It's a sure bet you forgot to ask Ms Nina T. Five (BA, PhD) whether she thinks the Hawkeye-Trapper relationship in *M*A*S*H* is a bit macho, or whether Peter Weir made *Gallipoli* just to show who was sharing bedrolls in 1915. In fact, you also forgot to say that the Bible is riddled with mateship tales, and even Shakespeare knew that if Romeo had hung out with the boys a bit more, he and Juliet wouldn't have made such a mess of things. The reason you don't counter the criticism is that wherever you turn somebody is putting down mateship. Switch on the radio and a sweet-talking psychologist is telling the talkback host that the sophisticated man is one who spends his time nurturing a meaningful, growing, sharing and enriching relationship with the woman in his life. For the sophisticated man, hanging out with the boys is too childish to contemplate. It sounds fine coming from a media psychologist, but putting into practice that which runs against instinct produces a by-product made up of confusion and misery.

Yet the real problem here is separating the notion of "meaningful relationship" from love. In our book of emotional rules, they're one and the same thing; and since Moses, the smart boys have known the two quickest ways to kill off a good relationship are over-attention and under-attention. Kahlil Gibran knocked it right on the head in *The Prophet* when he advised marrieds to "stand together yet not too far apart", because even trees are smart enough not to grow in each other's shadow. The communion which runs between men and women is one of the real treasures that make this life worth the struggle. It's something far too fine for the if-they-didn't-have-that-piece-of-real-estate-between-their-legs-you-wouldn't-talk-to-them school of thought but, still, it really isn't *everything*.

Every relationship requires space and a refuge from stress. If the male finds his safety valve in communing with the mates, then maybe mateship isn't unhealthy after all. Of course, there are reasonable limits, but next time the problem arises, just ask the lady: "Would you rather have me knocking back a few beers with Duncan or telling some strange girl my wife doesn't understand me?"

There's the story of the two pals who could find at least one day each month to take the small runabout out on the bay to wet a line or two. The fishing was incidental to the mood of relaxing with a few beers, enjoying each another's company and the knowledge that several metres of rock separated them from the everyday headaches of meeting mortgage payments and contemplating the chance of another world war. It was a regular ritual which they relished. I've heard that some junkies can get high on the process even before the needle hits the vein. Well, these guys used to start unwinding while hooking the boat to the towbar. This wasn't just a fishing trip; it was therapy. However, the arrangement went sour when one of the wives grew resentful of being excluded from something which was too close and regular. Come fishing day, she'd have him pencilled in for a heavy commitment and, after four cancellations, the outing was shelved. Indefinitely. It might have been unrelated, but within 12 months her husband was taking his thirst and problems to the bar near the office. In less than two years, she and the kids were living with her parents.

The man-woman package has so many combinations that it makes Rubik's cube look elementary. Yet in recent times, we've poured so many new rules into the game that the exceedingly difficult has rapidly become immeasurably complex. That doesn't mean we're stopping there. More rules and advice are appearing as part of some haphazard formula for making people happier. Counselling is the craze, and just look at the fortunes to be made by self-help authors and on-camera psychologists. Consequently, the web of reason has become so tangled that if we don't start picking at the knots pretty soon, we may never unravel it.

This life can be a lonely stretch if you let it, and by ditching the extended family idea for a vague notion called independence, we've gone a long way toward making it a helluva lot lonelier. Now, we're told to give the best mate the heave and spend more time and power on polishing the relationship. Fantastico! But what happens when the dung hits the air duct and she walks out? Do you go around and tell the mates you hadn't really meant to shut them out for the past five years?

It's said that the bottom-line ingredient for a successful friendship between two males is simplicity. That lack of complication is a refuge from all that is complex and confusing and in truth, offers a better view of life than the one from the shrink's couch or through the bottom of a bottle.

Two guys I know passed their tech exams together and scored jobs at the same factory. For five years they shared many experiences, both professional and social, until a transfer took one of them out of town. They maintained the friendship, and with wives and kids would holiday together every single year.

In short, the two were mates, and their friendship survived distance, hard times and prosperity. Recently one suffered a working accident, got peanuts for compensation and ultimately left the company. It was a snowballing tragedy because he was forced to take a shit-kicking job in order to meet the bills. When the interest rates hike put the noose around his neck, he sold the house, wrenched the kids out of school and headed for subsidised housing and a job in a dirty dot on the map in the Queensland coal belt.

A few days before the sale went through, his mate lobbed out of the blue, and the pair did a lunchtime-to-lights-out session in their favorite boozer. The lubricative effect of the old laughing juice let loose a lot of verbal shit, but as the beers went down and the conversation flowed, somehow it was easier to believe that fortune's grip on the scrotum wasn't quite as painful as it often seemed. They didn't talk about the hardship and headaches, but gave the good times plenty of mention.

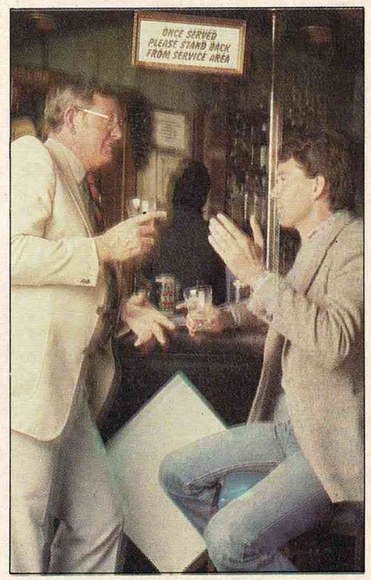
That 1971 trip to the Bathurst bike races. Can the Saints do any better next season? Planning another canoeing holiday on the Murray. It might have looked too boyish to be true, but it did the trick. In the world of the encounter group, they'd have been sitting around naked with a bunch of strangers, and in the end, they'd all kiss and hug and cry.

Let's face it, when mates get together they don't throw themselves into the most serious of pursuits. I just can't imagine the boys in the back bar passing up a weekend's fishing on the Hawkesbury in favor of attending a seminar on Class Tensions in a Multi-Cultural Society. It's okay for Michael Edgley — when he wants a circus, he flies one in and calls it business. The ordinary guy lets loose at the footy and he is sneeringly accused of behaving like a kid. So what if he is? We grow up too damn fast as it is.

It's true that adversity is the most fertile ground for mateship. Take a beach-head at Gallipoli, a mudhole in the Somme, a medical outpost in South Korea or the absurdity of Vietnam, and you can guess why mateship and warfare go hand in hand. It is the only semblance of sanity in a situation which defies reason. It's under those sorts of conditions that men discover

who they can live with and who they can't. Call it the Digger spirit, because it explains why Anzac Day is still something more than just an excuse to polish the medals, play two-up and get pissed at the RSL. It's also a celebration of some of the finer things that can grow out of the folly of politicians. No doubt, if we hatch a few more disasters as toilsome, pointless and tragic as war, we'll create additional reasons for men to form lasting bonds of mateship.

There's no prize for nominating Australia as one of the last real bastions of mateship. Gold-digging, warfare and plain old pioneering share the common thread of men against hardship. They are all male domains, and the attendant danger and hardship produce experiences which draw men together. Like it or not, since the cavemen first went clubbing dinosaurs, men have been sharing such experiences to the exclusion of women. Perhaps in 1981 when a pair of mates set out to land some trout, they're innocently following an instinct which harkens back to their forebears tramping out to take on the sabre-toothed tiger or a mammoth. As the micro-chip softens our lifestyle, the opportunity for man to confront physical hardship is reduced. In some circles, environment can get so protective as to insulate men from any mateship experiences.



"If you put on a charge and get crazed, it's best you do it in the company of a mate. Next morning, he'll have forgotten (or forgiven) your excesses."

It was probably the surrounds which triggered the subject, because we were gargling cheap moselle in a wine bar when a bright young graduate said she thought mateship was a myth. It was 1976, and a pretty hip time to agree with that sort of statement, but I'd seen enough of what I considered *true* mateship to deduce that she didn't know what she was talking about.

But in fact her living experience had made it impossible to observe mateship at close quarters. She was the daughter of a professional man who was fortunate enough to miss World War Two and evaded conscription on vocational status. With little sporting inclination, his time spent in the great outdoors amounted to little more than the sum total of his school assemblies and the daily stroll from the railway station to the office. He was a teetotaller, and his two closest working companions were his female secretary and a receptionist. In short, his life had presented few chances to form any close male relationships, let alone discover whether there was really anything noble about mateship. To this guy, and those close to him, the concept of mateship is incomprehensible; however it is certainly not a myth.

Climatically, there are few better places than Australia for getting outdoors and doing all those "adolescent" rough and tumble things — like rock fishing, slumming it at the cricket or getting away on a dirt bike for the weekend. Sure, women can do all those things, but you just run the test of taking the girl(s) on your next boys' foray and see what difference it makes. It might be fun, but you can bet you'll soon lose sight of the reason you came in the first place.

If two guys go beach fishing, they'll probably spend much of the time without contact. One will clear off down the beach to fish a gutter well away from his friend. To them, the day has to be seen in its entirety to be evaluated. It means getting up early in the morning and speculating about the prospects during the drive out to the beach; a few beers in the pub after to hold post mortems or celebrations, and perhaps plot the next outing. Of course, they could do it alone, but the drive out and the beers after wouldn't be half as enjoyable. Besides, every expert knows that fishing and drinking alone can be dangerous. Drinking in company can also be dangerous, but if you want to put on a charge and get crazed enough to shitbag everybody from the Creator down, then it's best you do it in the company of a mate. Come next morning, he'll have conveniently forgotten (or forgiven) most of your excesses.

You can count on a mate for a lot of things, and if he can make you laugh a bit, well that's a bonus. Greg and Peter were two footballing teammates who enjoyed an affinity which thrived on practical jokes. For years, they were booking other players on the wrong flights for interstate trips, booby-trapping their hotel bathrooms, signing the coach up for *Reader's Digest* subscriptions and calling the fire brigade when somebody would sneak a girl into his hotel room after curfew.

The team had disbanded many years before the secretary rounded them all up for a reunion dinner at his place. The address indicated he had leaped a few hundred rungs up the social scale since the side was together, and it was no secret he had married into a small fortune. The reunion, far from reviving the camaradarie of the playing days, was a staid affair spoiled by too little lager and too much elitist raving on behalf of the newly-rich secretary and his wife. Greg and Peter were the hope of the side, and when the hostess became an obvious (but unintentional) victim of Greg's cling-wrap over the toilet bowl trick, we awaited Peter's response. It didn't take long. He'd sabotaged the cheeseboard with the odd chunk of laundry soap and it was the hostess (again) who came unstuck while attempting to drown a slice of Sunlight with a slurp of sauterne. Eight years down the track, and the practical jokers were still working in tandem.

A tolerance of excess is another basic ingredient of mateship. To the outsider, an act which might appear totally off the wall has special relevance within the context of the relationship. There's the yarn about the two guys who shared a love of horse racing and offshore sailing. They had taken a long-range punt on a Caulfield Cup-Melbourne Cup double, and after getting the first leg in stood to collect $15,000 if the second got up.

On the Sunday before the cup, they were copping a pounding from a heavy southerly swell off the Barrier Reef, when their yacht hit a shoal as they ran close for the lee of a small island. They knew if they could get a line to the beach, they could save the yacht by dragging it ashore with a four-wheel-drive. They put the dinghy in the water, but a huge wave flipped it over, so there was nothing for it but to take the swim. The stronger of the two looped the line around his waist, and kicked off his track shoes. He faced a good 150 metres of wild, white water and it looked a good shot for a drowning statistic. Even without the weight of the line, it was a nightmare swim. He was poised for the dive, waiting for a break in the swell when he felt his mate's tap on the shoulder: "Hey, just in case you screw up," he yelled over the roar of the surf, "I think you'd better tell me where you left the betting slip."

There are those who will say there is no room for that sort of humor in this life. Get serious, now. Laugh at Bert Newton and Paul Hogan on the box, but don't laugh about those sort of things. C'mon — we're supposed to be adults.

Movies and modern literature can take a bow for fuelling the unpopularity of mateship. Take a look at our heroes — Dirty Harry, James Bond, Serpico, Mad Max, Callan and most Charles Bronson parts. What do they have in common? They're all pushing the cause of the rugged individualist. They're loners and their message is that if you can't cut it on your own, you must be something less than a man. Maybe many wives and girlfriends see their men that way, but the real truth is that this world's battles are won by quiet heroes who pool their talents in mutual respect and a spirit of co-operation. Nobody gets to star, but the job gets done. It's easy for the movies to make heroes of loners if only because it's hard for the camera to scrutinise more than one character at a time.

For every loner hero, there are a dozen loner villains. If Mark David Chapman had a close buddy or two, he could have been shooting pool instead of hanging around the Dakota. Ditto for the Yorkshire Ripper, Richard Speck and the LA Hillside Strangler. And it's not only the loners from the trashier side of the tracks who screw up when they cut themselves off from their fellow man. When Nixon went it alone, the walls came crashing in. Gough Whitlam, to a lesser degree went the same way, which might leave us wondering about Malcolm Fraser and Bill Hayden. Neither is blessed with the conviviality to make him the rage of the late-night card-game. As every leader who has been stabbed by the backbench will say, it doesn't hurt to be one of the boys — sometimes.

That's fair enough, but what about you — the ordinary guy who every now and then simply likes to spend part of his leisure time with other men? It's okay for Sir James Hardy — he can splash around in wine and yachts on a full-time basis. Most of us have jobs which we don't particularly like, and a weekend's fishing, a Friday night in the pub or a bush hike in the mountains are the refuges and breathing spaces that make the struggle that much more tolerable. You've formed a few solid friendships over the years, and when you gather, it's not to dabble in nuclear equations, eulogise Wordsworth or contemplate the direction of Up. It's purely to take a breather from all the dramas and demands of everyday life.

Okay, it's fantasy time. Imagine yourself living well in Sydney; you enjoy perfect job satisfaction and outstanding pay: there's a secluded weekender waiting at Palm Beach and you spend the other five nights in a quiet, palatial waterside apartment at Potts Point; you don't ride on public transport; you do drive a leased BMW and you vacation in Europe or the US at least once a year. It's a damn fine lifestyle and you've worked hard to achieve it.

Late one afternoon at a business conference, you meet *the* woman. In her company's structure, she rates equal pay and responsibility to you. Like you, she is university-educated, takes bullshit from nobody, is unmarried and incredibly strong willed. The old electricity starts to flow, and within a month, the pair of you have something pretty solid going.

It's been that way for a little more than a year, when out of the blue, you get a call from a friend in Cairns. He's got access to one of the best marlin boats on the coast, and he says it's shaping as the best season for years. How about flying up for a week? You want to go, and normally would not hesitate, but your woman resents being excluded and thinks the whole idea of five guys chugging around after fish is pretty macho and childish. If you go, she might have to reassess the relationship. What do you do?

You don't know? Well, nor do I. And nor do any of those self-help authors, or the problem columnists. Guys have been known to give up a friend to please a lover, and sometimes the lover has to take the walk. It comes down to what sort of importance you place on the relationship. You can consult the experts, but as sure as eggs don't bounce, you will either make the wrong move or the right one for all the wrong reasons. And it's also a sure bet that if you don't crash and burn this time, then you will the next — or the time after that. It's unavoidable.

Of course, you do resent a lover who stipulates just how much of you she is willing to share, and with whom. If you stay with the girl, your mate will almost certainly be more understanding than the lover, but if it goes the other way, don't count too heavily on the girl being sympathetic. Don't ask why this is, it's simply how it is, and always has been. If it *does* go sad and sour between you and the girl, bear in mind that it might be a good time to have a mate.

You can believe there are people who have meaningful, satisfying jobs in which the thump of the bundy, the swish of automatic doors opening in the morning or the chatter of the word processor is pure music to the ears. Some people get to make award-winning TV documentaries and others stamp out washers.

Once I spoke with a football manager whose club had just signed a gifted country recruit. The boy could not make headway in the city club until an old coach from the previous club suggested the city outfit buy the player's centre partner. They'd been together a long time, and the old coach claimed the brilliance of the one wouldn't spark without the understanding of the other. Their mateship not only became an important part of the team structure, but helped establish a spirit of co-operation which even made pre-season training seem like fun.

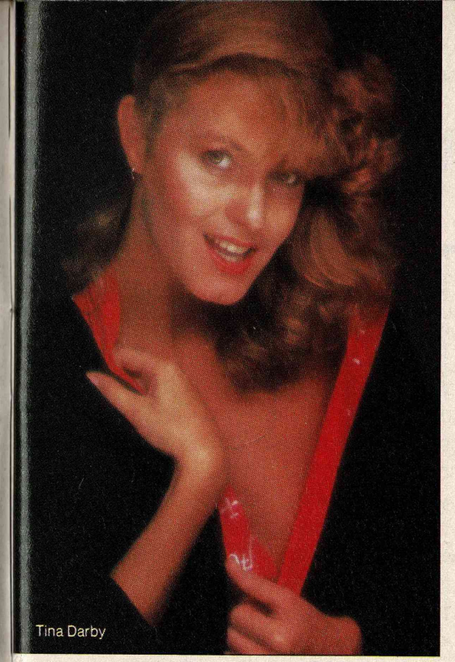
The ancient Greeks knew it, so did the Pacific Islanders. Lately, the industrious Japanese have been criticising Aussies for it, but other people are starting to realise that the work ethic isn't everything. The sensible man is the guy who can keep his slogging at the factory or office to a reasonable minimum, so he can enrich his life by spending his leisure time with people of his choice — not those with whom his boss wants him to rub shoulders each day.

People are discovering that the full-on work ethic can add up to an extremely shallow existence. Somehow, even when it is a question of survival, there has to be a balance between work and the need for play and companionship. If the hungry '80s find us back in the rut of swapping our existence for a business suit and an economics degree, then maybe it's time we remember how the '60s saw solicitors opting out to become farmers, architects to build boats and bank clerks to become commune dwellers.

We work because it's damn hard to avoid it, but don't let it keep you from those mateship associations you've cherished for so long. It's patently obvious: if you permit work to shut the door on companionship, you'll be locking out the best cure for work stress there is.

Australian Playboy December 1981

Karen Pini



Tina Darby

THE GIRLS OF TELEVISION

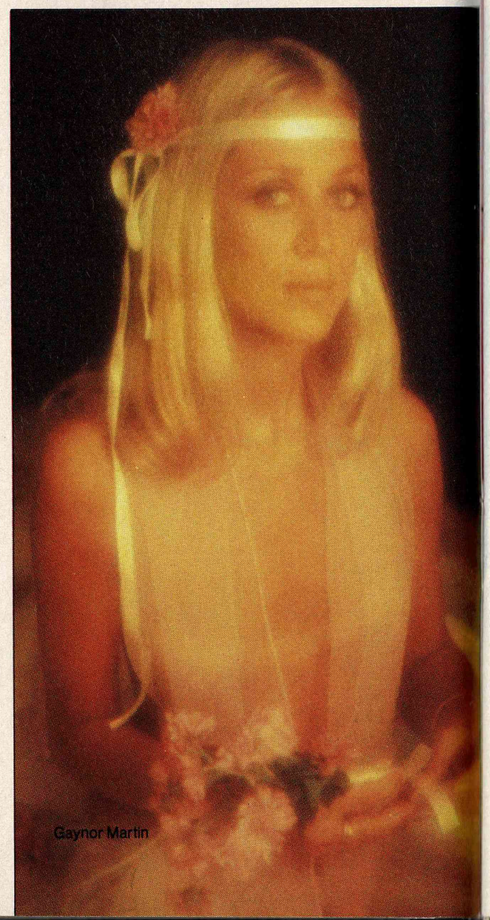
THERE HAS never been a time in Australian television history when part of the formula for successful ratings didn't spell GIRLS. Any producer who forgets that one of the best ways to fill the screen is with *la femme* is likely to find his head on the cutting room floor, PLAYBOY did a quick scan over the TV program guide to examine the available talent and came up with these girls, all of them extremely popular. So happy viewing.

Kylie Foster

Deborah Gray

Say "Cr-cr-cr-crocodile" and you immediately think of Micki Gardener. Well, if not the name, then at least the face of the girl who nibbled on confectionery while Tarzan went bananas in the TV advert. Micki stepped into media land via a modelling career which displayed her beautiful form in many ways, including the July cover of PLAYBOY. Micki now calls Sydney her home, despite being a native of Dame Edna's Moonee Ponds.

Classic good looks and her solid grounding in the theatre back Lynda Stoner's credentials as one of TV's loveliest ladies. A formal background in acting in Adelaide preceded her move to the ABC and the *Paul Hogan Show*. *Cop Shop* followed.



Gaynor Martin

Micki Gardener

One TV girl who qualifies on hot looks and sheer ability is Megan Williams of *The Sullivans.* The girl from a show-business family has made numerous stage appearances as both a singer and dancer, besides featuring in *Division Four* and *All At Sea.*

Beautiful blonde Kerri-Anne Wright has progressed via work as a model to be a dramatic all-rounder on *The Restless Years.*

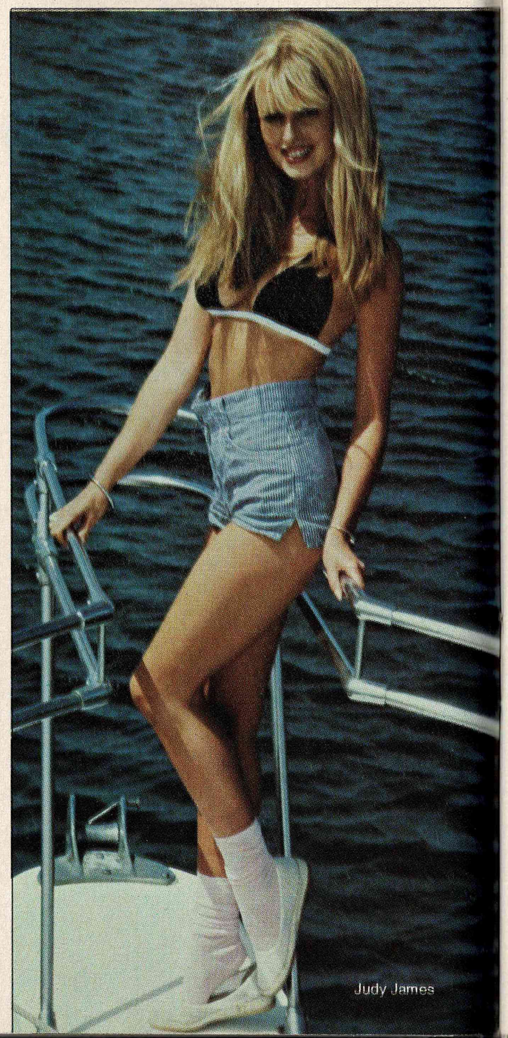
It was through *The Restless Years* that former Playmate of the Year, Rosemary Paul, found her entrée into television.

Raina McKeon

Kerri-Anne Wright

Rosemary Paul

Megan Williams

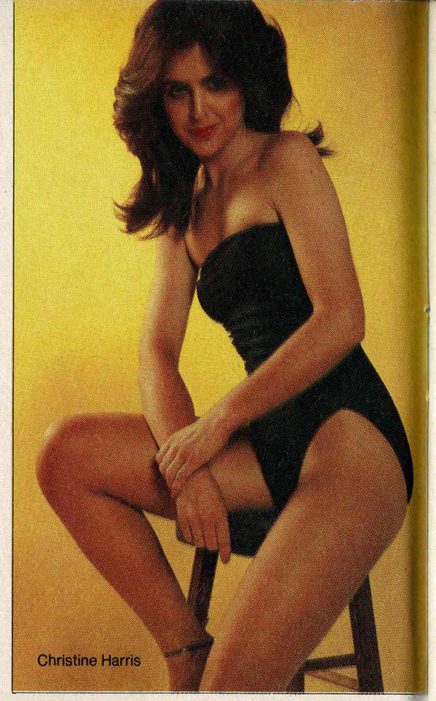


Judy James

Kim Wran

Lynda Stoner

The 1980 Playmate of the Year, Karen West, is becoming well-known to viewers of the *Don Lane* and *Paul Hogan* shows. Playmate status was also the route to TV appearances for Deborah Gray and Kylie Foster. Karen Pini and Kim Wran have both appeared on *The Young Doctors*. Miss India, Raina McKeon also brightened up the medical TV series, as have Christine Harris and Tina Darby. Here are two other TV lovelies, Judy James, of *Sale of the Century* and Gaynor Martin of *Skyways*.


Christine Harris

Lynda Stoner

Karen West

Humor by Richard Beckett

BLUE FUNK

THERE WAS once a time in our splendid past when the Queensland blue heeler, or Queensland blue, as the animal is more commonly known, epitomised everything that stood for a proud nation. He was brutish, tough, vicious-tempered, would fight at a drop of a hat but stuck by his mates, hated fancy food and would screw anything that moved.

Even better, those Pommie bastards wouldn't have a bar of him. The *la-di-dahs* who ran Cruft's Dog Show declared he was not "a recognised breed", but they didn't bloody dare come over here and say that, did they? My colonial oath they didn't, because old Blue here would've had their moleskins off quicker than they could change their accents.

Times, unfortunately, change. Outside my window sits Bingara Mayo's son, the descendant of a once-feared and terrifying race. The magpies have just stolen his breakfast toast.

My family has had a long if somewhat erractic connection with Queensland blues, so when I sloped off to the country once again about a year back, I decided that only a *proper* dog would do. None of your silly city terriers. It had to be a man's dog — a mate and a pub fighter, a back-of-the-ute barker, one of those bastards who terrify all comers by slavering at the end of a chain. When I mentioned this decision to my companion at our five-acre weed factory, she became very alarmed and wrote to her sister, who replied that such an animal sounded "quite horrible".

Satisfied that anything which upset Beverley's sister was a good omen, I stuck to my decision and contacted an old mate of mine who specialises in things that fall from the backs of trucks.

Now everybody has a mate like this, except that perhaps mine is somewhat odder than most. While others deal in genuine crocodile-skin bags, wrist watches and stuffed bears, plus the occasional chook, my mate does dogs.

When I rang him about the matter, he gave that terrifying Australian reassurance in reply: "No worries." I should have twigged then, because every time that cry is uttered in the land, it means, at very best, that your house is going to burn to the ground, or to use the old line, somebody is going to run away with your wife and *send her back.*

But because he was a mate, I was lulled into false expectancy. The old Brendan wouldn't muck things up, would he? He wouldn't let me down. Not bloody much he wouldn't. Anyway, there was silence for about three months and I forgot about the matter, continuing to seek my simple solitary rustic pleasures in the public bar of Molong's Exchange Hotel (which passes for Thoreau's Walden Pond in this part of the world).

Then good old Brendan rang. Not only did he have one blue, but he seemed to have about a thousand of them of all shapes, sizes, sexes and ages. They were all line bred, and they were all free. Pushing the thought from my mind that he had perhaps conducted a one-man guerrilla raid on the NSW Cattle Dog Society's annual show, and now had the slavering horde confined in his third floor "studio apartment", I said I would take one, one only, and I thought it only fair that it should be the first one, rather than the last, he had grabbed,

Illustration by Alan Ewart

so that is how Bingara Mayo's son, officially known as Buddy, but more generally referred to as Dickhead, came into my life. But before one gets down to the horror of it all, a little history about the noble breed for the benefit of outsiders.

As with everything Australian, nobody is quite sure how they began, which is why the venerable Cruft's Dog Show wouldn't have anything at all to do with the breed until comparatively recently.

To begin with, the working dogs brought out from England had difficulty with Australian conditions. They simply were not tough enough to be able to handle cattle in the vast western plains that had opened up over the Great Dividing Range. Basically, in the old world, dogs had never been used to work cattle anyway, let alone the half-wild scrubbers that developed in this country. Then, around the 1850s, a drover from Bathurst, by the name of Timmins, decided that as the native dingo was doing fairly well at the business without any training whatsoever (apart from the unfortunate idiosyncrasy that he tended to keep the animals for himself rather than bring them back to the rightful owner) mucked around with a couple of his own dogs and the wild fellows. His breed was known as the Timmins' Biter. The dogs were silent (like the dingo) and would heel. But something went wrong and the breed did not develop any further after its initial success. Somewhat later on, a breed known as Hall's Heelers started to be noticed in the working dog world.

Once again, they appeared to have a lot of dingo, plus smooth-haired collie, in them, but there are tales of other crosses. One early cross is said to have included the old dalmatian, or fire dog, to give a guard strain. Another, the English market cattle dog, known as Smithfield, has made some sort of shadowy appearance. All this is still argued about by the breeders of blues, but some exactness starts to appear in the 1890s, when Robert Kaleski appeared on the scene and started breeding cattle dogs in earnest in Sydney. At that time, it was generally claimed that a separate strain had been continuously bred in Muswellbrook, in the Hunter Valley, for about 18 years.

No matter. What we then finished up with was a heavily built, broad-faced dog, with blue or red markings and a harsh, almost waterproof, coat. By breeding, the dogs were silent, but they bit, and they bit low. Then somebody introduced a blue highland collie strain into the breed, sometimes known as a Welsh Heeler, and so we went on. What one had was more or less a dog fruit salad. Since then, dingoes have been put back into the breed to stop it from going soft, and there has been a lot of mucking around to make the paws more cat-like so they can work better over rough, burr-infested country.

The news of the arrival of Bingara Mayo's son was not taken with any wild enthusiasm by the other half of our greenie groupie commune. She had gone through a deprived childhood, one that had been totally petless, so one had to answer an innumerable list about housing (chain the bastard up), hygiene (chain the bastard up), attitudes to strangers (chain the bastard up), fleas (chain the bastard up), sex life (chain the bastard up), diet (chain the bastard up), and general obedience (hit the bastard with a piece of four-by-two). But one question absolutely floored me: "Do you," she said, "do you think that we should get him some boots? No, now come on, Richard. I'm serious. I want to know these things."

"Booties for a blue heeler?" I replied, more than somewhat thunderstruck. "Have you gone completely and utterly raving mad? They'll fall down in the local boozer. We'll be the bloody laughing stock of this town. The owners of the only limp-wristed cattle dog in Australia. And what about the other dogs? Think of the shame of it. He'll either learn to walk on the prickles or lump the things as far as I am concerned. Good God!"

The rest of that evening passed in constrained silence.

Anyway, the great day arrived at last. Brendan arrived with an extremely confused tale abut being delayed on the road by bikies, of taking Buddy, son of Bingara Mayo, to a CIB press conference, of introducing him to Ita Buttrose of Great Journalism Fame in some damned lift, and of how he and the dog had both been permanently banned from Sydney's Evening Star Hotel for fighting — he (Brendan) doing the fighting up top and good old Buddy boy doing the floor work.

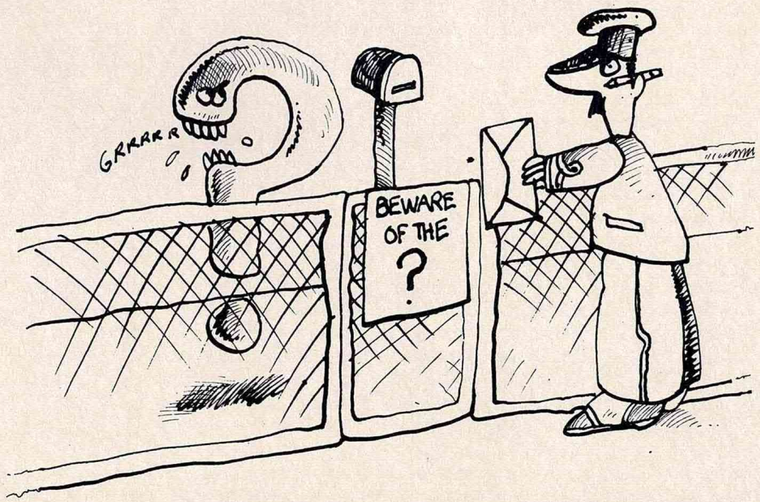
Buddy got out of the car and looked around him with an expression of sheer horror. I was handed a pile of blue ribbons which the said animal was supposed to have won. I read them . . . Campbelltown, Dapto, Warringah, Sutherland Shire, Fairfield, St George, Hawkesbury and, to cap it all, "Blaxland-Glenbrook RSL & Citizens' KNL & T Club".

"Doesn't exactly move in high society, does he?" I said. "What's the owner been doing with him? Hiding him in the bush before painting him brown and trying to take out the Irish whippet cup at the Royal?"

Brendan maintained a dignified silence, apart from saying with some semblance of hurt: "Anyway, he bit a collie yesterday."

My further reply that I would have liked Bingara Mayo's son somewhat better if he had managed to bite either a copper at the CIB conference or Ita Buttrose didn't got down too well, so without further ado, we adjourned to the pub for a couple of rums.

But just before we departed, a stray kitten that had been hurled over the fence by some generous owner the night before walked up to the dog. Hello, here's a go then, I thought to myself with some enthusiasm. We'll see a bit of action and get rid of that cat without the messy business of sacks and drowning. The moggie walked right up to Bingaga Mayo's son and stuck its nose on his. Bingara Mayo's son looked thoughtful for a moment, then turned tail and slunk away under a tree.



That was the start of it all. Since then, the brilliance of his character has unfolded day by day. We found out, for instance, that he not only had no idea of what a raw bone was, but that as far as we know, he is the only dog in the world who, instead of digging a hole and putting the bone in said hole, attempts, by sheer physical strength, to force it underground by pushing it directly downwards with his nose. Since our soil is solid clay, Bingara Mayo's son's nose is now somewhat squashed.

He possesses some rudiments of dog etiquette. He knows that when one meets another dog, one has a piss and a sniff, but he can't cock his leg properly and falls over on his side. He is also dimly aware that whenever one meets another dog, one usually scratches the ground up a bit with the back feet, but he doesn't realise that one has a piss, *then* a scratch, so that he just stands in one spot scratching and sending grass and clods of earth flying in all directions while the visiting dog looks on in amazement.

He can't understand what sheep are and sits gloomily watching them for hours. And as for horses — well, they bother him so much that he pretends that they are not there at all.

Enemy dogs are also a problem, because he doesn't seem to possess the mechanism to get his hackles up. But he's game. He stands directly in front of the enemy and barks straight into his face. Oddly enough, the said adversary usually opens his jaws and clamps them firmly on to Bingara Mayo's son's nose. This upsets him; it upsets me; it upsets the other half of the greenie groupie commune; it upsets damn near everybody in the hamlet. But where does one find a blue heeler school of street fighting? The Yellow Pages are of absolutely no help.

One can go on: about his method of seeing intruders off the place (barking once and running like hell in the opposite direction); about his sneaky and cowardly habit of attempting to bully the cat when he thinks nobody is looking; about the day he got everything totally wrong and made a sexual pass at the cat, getting his face slashed; about the time he was badly scared by Beverley defrosting the refrigerator and cowered under the house for three hours; about the time he got a nasty scare from the coke bucket; about the one time he got an erection and attempted to bite if off in blind panic; and of how the wagtails make his life one long misery.

In retrospect, apart from this morning's infamous and humiliating magpie toast-stealing incident, the worst day was when we attempted to take him for a ride in the ute. Now everybody knows that country utes and blue heelers go together. I'm not quite sure about it, but I believe that in the country, there is a law that you are not allowed to drive a ute at all unless you have a slobbering barker carrying on like a maniac in the tray. So we didn't give it a thought, did we? It was just that one day and we were going for the usual scenic ride to the hamlet tip, so for a treat I hurled him in along with the gunge. Instant paranoia set in. We hadn't gone three metres than he leaped out. We left him quivering by the side of the road.

This was just too much. Enraged, I rang good old Brendan. "Do you know," I shouted, "that the bastard can't even ride in the back of a ute? What sort of a damned dog is this?" Brendan remained unmoved. "You'll have to train him," he replied. "Sit in the back with him, like. Get him used to it. Besides which, the bloke who bred him said he'd be much better after he's had a bit, you know?"

I gave up then. Visions of cuddling the bugger in the back of the ute to stop him panicking, then teaching him how to have a root after we got there, were just too much. What the hell, let him be persecuted, I reasoned.

A few weeks back, the breeder who had donated Bingara Mayo's son for free rang up to see how his little darling was getting along. I gave the opinion that our lad was harmless, but perhaps, well, perhaps he was as thick as two bricks. There was a thoughtful pause at the end of the line, then the breeder said carefully: "Well, I know what you mean, though I wouldn't quite put it that way. He's going to take a lot of training, like . . . (a longer pause here) . . . he's sort of dormant."

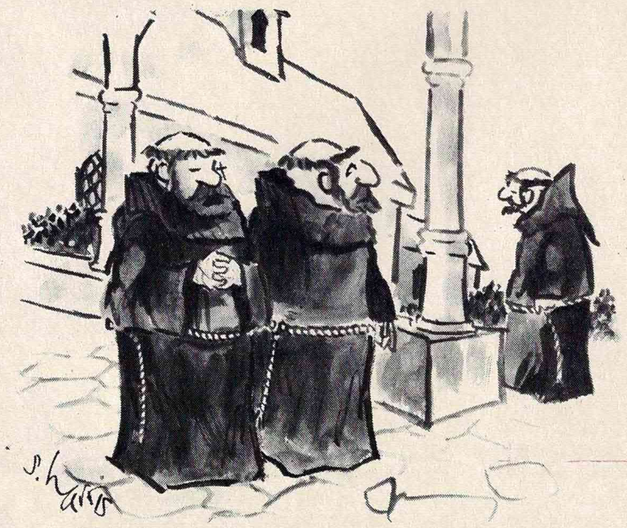
So there he's going to sit, the old dormant dickhead, the last of a long proud line, stretching back to the Timmins' Biters. But it's not only dogs that are failing these days. I mean, it's a whole generation thing.

I was at a country gathering the other day having yet again failed to induce in Bingara Mayo's son the delights of ute travel, when a kid of about 14 strolled up to me and asked me for a smoke. I said I didn't have any tailor-mades, but he could have the makings if he needed one badly. He scuffed around for a bit, looked somewhat embarrassed, then said: "I'd like one . . . if you could roll it for me."

I was so bloody startled that *I did* roll him one. He wasn't quite gormless, though, because he had his own matches.

I mean, what sort of nation is this turning into? What the hell has happened to the spirit of Anzac? Cattle dogs that can't bury a bone and kids who can't roll a fag. They'd make a good pair, Buddy and that 14 year old. You can just see them now, can't you? Together I mean. He would be falling on his side trying to have a piss and the kid'd be sticking Champion Ruby in his ear. And as for chatting up a pair of likely sheilas . . .

And finally, what about his poor old dad, the famous Bingara Mayo himself? He's a true blue. He's led a good life: worried a few cattle in his time, bitten a few blokes, tried to bring the fool up right. Where did he go wrong, I ask you?



"Brother Antonius will soon be Father Antonius — he just got hit with a paternity suit."

Australian Playboy December 1981

5.45 TO NIRVANA

Fiction by Tony Lintermans

IT WAS the last wave of the day. Bob could feel it swelling beneath his surfboard, and decided to take it into shore. After coming through hard on the inside all afternoon, it was time to quit. Besides, the others had left when the sun dipped below the mountains behind Kennet River. He lowered himself on to the board from a cowboy position and started paddling. The

Photography by Hugh Edwards

wave walled. crouched on the board, he let it take him through the necessary motions of the drop and the turn. Rider and board slotted into the wave like a plug into a socket. Moving right along the wall, the lip curling and breaking close behind him, the power of the ocean flowed through his body. Though alert to every nuance, every whimsy of the wave, he felt drugged. Silence and the long effort of concentration made his mind an instrument in a fluid orchestra.

The wave started closing out. Speeding down the last few metres toward the light at the end of what was not quite a tunnel, he prepared to turn and ride the foam in like any Sunday surfer. But wait a minute — something funny had taken over. The patch of light was now a huge black gap, a dark mouth waiting. Too late to turn, into the giant shark's mouth he went. Bob screamed — and then he lost consciousness.

NEAR THE rocky point, the last panel van sputtered into life, inched back along the pitted track.

"Jesus, it's cold," said the driver, still in his wetsuit.

"Yeah," said his mate. "Bags first shower. Sure hope that Joe's got the hot water going."

"He should have," said the driver, switching on the van's headlights. "I reminded him about that."

The passenger turned and looked out at the shadowed sea, darker now that the purple clouds spray-painted on the side of the van.

"I can't see that other guy — what was his name?"

"Bob," the driver replied. "If he doesn't come in soon, he'll have no balls left."

"He had plenty of balls this arvo, though," said the passenger. "I've never seen anybody rip Kennet apart like that."

"He's got balls all right. I just hope he's got the brains to come in when icebergs start forming."

He turned on to the Great Ocean Road, and headed for home, a rented unit less than a kilometre away. The weak winter sun had gone, leaving streaks of faded orange as the only sign of a good day in the surf. The illuminated clock on the dash said 5.45.

THE FIRST thing Bob noticed when he came to was his body temperature. He felt warm inside, as if he had paddled all day on an inflatable electric blanket. It was one of those May nights when the light from the stars made the moon superfluous. Bob checked his wetsuit. Not a rip in it. Then he noticed his board floating a few metres to his left. He swam over to examine it. Hard to see precisely, but he'd swear it had no new dents.

"Am I alive or dead?" he wondered. The mountains of Kennet River were nowhere in sight. The ocean surrounded him on all sides, its soft swelling somewhat reminiscent of a dreaming giant breathing.

"Why don't I feel cold?" He sat up on his board and looked around. Nothing. He trailed a hand in the water. I felt like silk. Lifting his hand, droplets of water clung to the skin, then fell back into the sea. His mind was as clear as the night sky.

"The patch of light was now a huge black gap, a dark mouth waiting. Too late to turn, into the giant shark's mouth he went. He screamed then lost consciousness."

Questions formed, but dissolved before they could be uttered. Somewhere in his skull, a black knot of panic tried to assert itself, but was eroded by silence.

It was only after he'd started paddling that he noticed the dorsal fin. He didn't know why he was paddling, it was something to do, but the fin gave point to the exercise. Then another one appeared, circling leisurely behind him. Bob wasn't afraid. What was there to fear from a shark if you're already dead? In these circumstances, death and silence were cut from the same silk.

He paddled on, the number of sharks increasing by the minute. Or it could have been by the hour. The idea of time seemed absurd out here. As if a clock could explain anything. The insane tick-tock of technology was as faint as was his memory of Kennet River mountains. Keeping the same distance from him, about 70 metres, the school of sharks fanned out in a V formation, pushing him onwards. Bob was at the head of the V. He decided to change direction, paddle more to the right, but as he did so, the sharks moved, nudging him back on course.

I'm being herded, he thought, like a brumby. He started humming *Ghost Riders in the Sky,* and laughed. No sound emerged. He bellowed like a mad bull. His lungs hurt, but still there was no sound. "Oh well, it's not as if I'll have to speak to anybody," he mused. A wall of foam hit him in the face. He didn't have his leg rope on, and the board was carried off. The wave died as quickly as it had begun, and he struck out for the board, 30 metres away. He wasn't tired. Fatigue was another label he'd left behind.

Climbing back on to the board, he attached the leg rope to his ankle. Looking around, he noticed the sharks disappearing. They moved smoothly, like black Rolls-Royces swallowing distance. Another wave was coming and he paddled furiously to beat the break. At the crest, just before it broke, he looked along the line of the wave. Somebody else was there.

Cutting up the wall as if it was his favorite cake, a dark form hurtled along the right break, doing 360-degree turns at every opportunity. He wasn't riding, he was dancing. At the end of the ride he pulled out, dropped down on to the board, arms already pistoning, paddling back for the next one. Bob paddled too. Even though silence remained unbroken, there was no need to watch for the next set. Waves were coming through every two minutes. When the swell came, he caught it with a flick or two of his wrist, and screamed along a four-metre tube.

Phosphorescence glistened in the water, illuminating the cylinder down which he sped. Fishes holding torches couldn't have done a better job. His feet were glued to the board. He flicked off the wave just before the tube collapsed after a couple of hundred metres, and looked up at the laconic, unchanging stars. Paddling back, waiting for the next one. The other guy had already taken off. Instead of standing up, he'd slipped off his board and was shooting down the wave on his belly, his arms outstretched, face cutting the water, using a dipped left ankle as a guiding rudder. He was a bullet in a barrel.

Bob felt a tug on his board. A thought crossed his mind. Had the sharks returned? Another wave. He turned the board around and took a left break this time. They were peeling off in either direction from wherever he happened to be. Some were two metres high, some were six. What they had in common was perfect shape and power. This time, he stood on his hands, legs together and arching back over his head to just fit inside the tube. Absolute fluidity made him want to meditate upside down. At the end, he floated out of the wave, landing on his board with a thud.

After an hour or two of constant rides, he thought of the bottom. Was it a reef down there, he wondered? He decided to ask the other guy, and waited until he paddled near enough. For the first time he saw the other surfer's face. It was creased with age, and female. With the old woman's face went a youthful body. She acknowledged Bob with a friendly gaze.

"Fantastic surf," said Bob, being cool. "What do you think's below?"

She must have heard what he said even though his words were trapped inside his head, because she looked down over the front of her board. Then she leant back, reaching into a hip pocket which wasn't there, and pulled out an imaginary cylindrical object. She pretended to adjust it and put it, invisible, to her eye. Leaning down over the board, she examined the water with her make-believe telescope for a few moments, then moved upright again. Pointing to the bottom, she picked up a handful of sea, let it run through her fingers.

"I see," said Bob, silently.

How could he ask questions in a mute world? The woman must have read his mind, because she started to unzip her wetsuit. She beckoned Bob closer. Reaching into a pocket which was there, she pulled out a plastic writing pad and waterproof felt pen.

"I am Isadora," she scrawled in huge, childlike letters. "I used to be a dancer. One day, my scarf caught in the wheels of a sports car. I choked to death while speeding. It was a good way to go, but did nothing at all for my face."

Bob nodded. He'd heard of Isadora Duncan, the famous dancer of the wild '20s. An old riddle flickered across his brain. When is a door not a door? When it's ajar. Or when it's a Duncan had been another answer.

"What are you doing here?" He mouthed each word slowly, drawing a question mark, first pointing at her, then at the surrounding sea. "And where the hell are we?" he might have asked — had the lady only been a little less famous.

She laughed noiselessly, throwing her head back. Luckily, it floated. Bob paddled around and picked it up, handing it back gingerly.

"Thank you," she scrawled. "That often happens. The only way to handle nirvana is to go with the flow. As soon as you start questioning, you separate yourself from any cosmic harmony."

She stopped and looked around. Rubbing out the page she had filled in, she started again. Bob was interested, and manoeuvred his board even closer, putting a hand on the firm shoulder over which he was peering. He'd never thought of reading novels between sets, but it wasn't a bad idea.

"See?" she wrote. "No waves now. The vibe is buggered. Each wave is a thought welling up out of the vast pool of Being. You can do anything on these waves, because they're part of you. The only way the surf's going to come back is if we really want it to, with every single cell in our bodies."

"How could he ask questions in a mute world? The woman must have read his mind because she started to unzip her wetsuit. Then she beckoned Bob to come closer."

She rubbed out the page and unzipped her wetsuit jacket again. Bob leaned over and held her arm, preventing her from putting the pad away. She looked into his eyes and saw the questioning still there. She shook her head from side to side, slowly. Bob took the pad and pen and tried to write. He wanted to know why she had a young body, but an old head, why she surfed when she used to be a dancer, how did she come here, by shark from the 1920s, or what? The pen didn't work. He blew on it, shook it, but it still didn't work.

"Stuff it," he said.

She was smiling. Taking the pad, she wrote on it, "Listen. If you don't want to be stranded out here, if you don't want to spend the rest of your life caught in a spider's web of your own sticky questions, let go of your mind and start imagining perfect tubes. It's the only way back. Only you can make it happen."

She moved off from him, putting the notebook back in place. He watched her paddling away. She seemed tired, a weary shadow growing less substantial by the minute. Suddenly, her board lurched, and she crouched low over the nose, screaming down a wave Bob couldn't see. It wasn't there, he would swear. In a flash, she was gone, devoured by silence, leaving not a ripple or a note.

For the first time, Bob noticed the cold. Isadora's sudden exit left a chill over everything. He realised he was alone, a twig on eternity's lake.

Water was now a silken trap. He didn't panic, but resigned himself to a new, more delicate death. His mind went blank. At that precise moment, a wave picked him up, hurling him awake on a half-formed wall and he hurtled down the face, ripping it apart. It seemed to go on forever.

When he saw the black mouth waiting at the end of the pipeline, he didn't hesitate. Aiming straight for the back of the throat, he plunged willingly into darkness. Losing consciousness was a small fare to pay for the trip back . . .

SUNRISE on the beach at Kennet River. People were running everywhere. Car horns blared. Quite a crowd for so early in the morning, but what you can expect on a Sunday when the tide is right at Kennet.

"What's all the fuss?" said the driver of a panel van with purple clouds on its side.

"A shark," said a girl in the next car overlooking the point.

Three hundred metres out, a shark circled around a surfer. He paddled wearily, making an effort to catch a lift with each swell.

When he made it to within a few metres of the shore, the shark left. Four or five men helped the tired surfer on to the rocks. It's that lunatic from last night, the driver realised.

"Have you been out all night?" he asked Bob, who collapsed on a rock.

He nodded once.

"Why?"

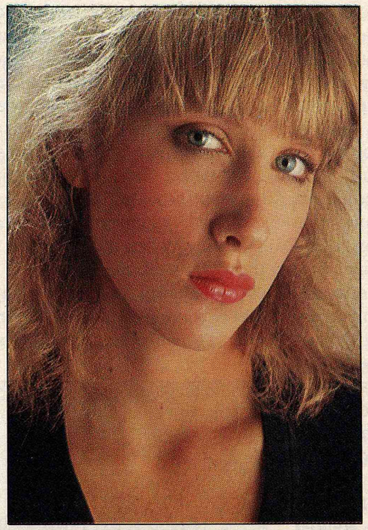
Bob was picked up and carried to the nearest van. Somebody was rubbing his head with a towel, another was helping him out of his wetsuit.

"I was dancing," Bob whispered, "out there. With Isadora Duncan." He laughed weakly, more like a hiss. "But I blew it."

He collapsed, unable to speak.

"Lost his marbles," muttered the van driver.

"Bonkers," agreed the passenger.

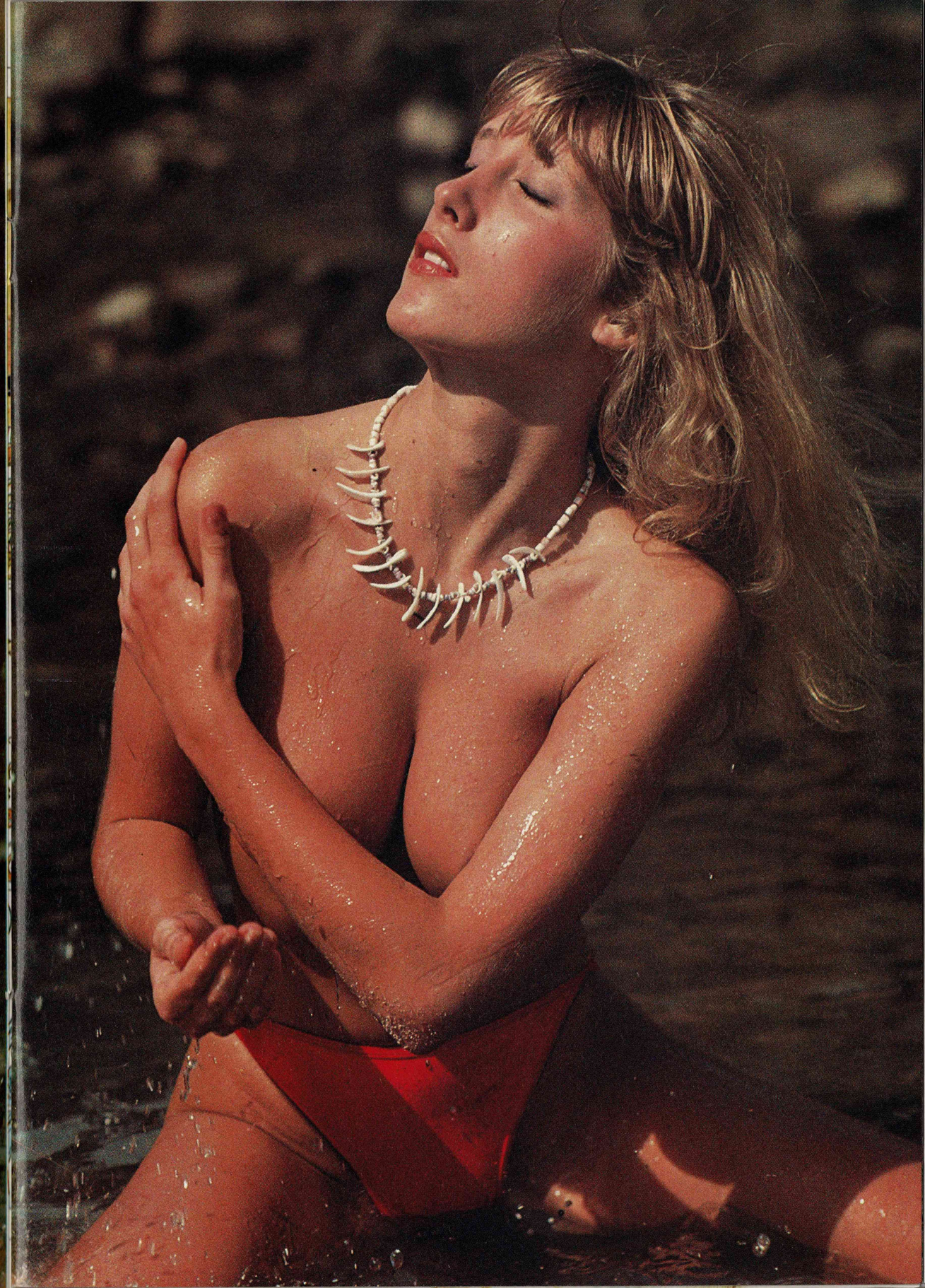


The newly-opened north Queensland resort of Fitzroy Island provides the perfect backdrop for our December Playmate — the gorgeous Amanda Dole, who is a true child of the tropical sun.

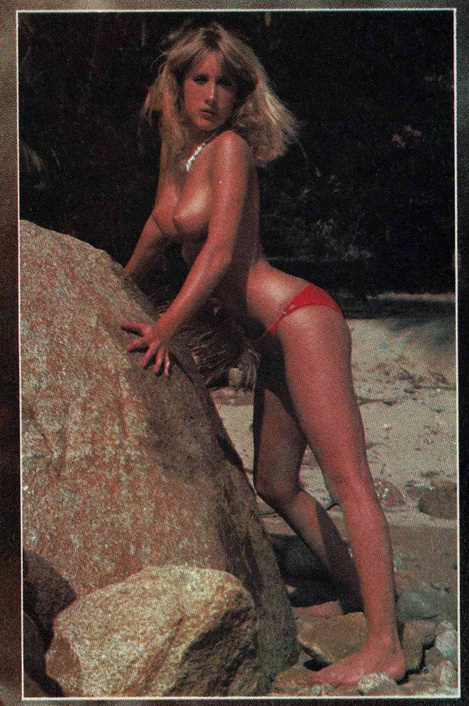
LIVING DOLL

IN CASE you've forgotten what happens when the sun moves south again and the bodies come out of their winter hibernation, we present Amanda Dole as evidence of all that is great about the Australian summer. We plucked Amanda out of the chill of a Sydney winter and jetted north for the sun and blue skies of Cairns and nearby Fitzroy Island — newest of the Barrier Reef resorts — where we found the ideal location for a real child of the sun. The trip also provided Amanda with a bonus, because we stumbled on the set of the new action thriller *Turkey Shoot,* and our Miss December has acting ambitions. When we weren't busy shooting Amanda, she was busy watching the shooting of the movie, which stars Olivia Hussey and Steve Railsback. The quiet reef waters at Cairns are bordered by some of the most remote and beautiful beaches on the Australian coast, and to a sun-starved Sydney girl, the temptation to frolic nude in the warm waters was irresistible. When not making life easy for photographers, Amanda spends her summer sunning at one of Sydney's famous northern beaches, bolstering the fortunes of a fledgling rock band or involving herself in promotional work. The acting urge is very strong in her, and she is looking forward to formal training with the aim of travel to Europe to further her budding career.

Photography by Colin Stead

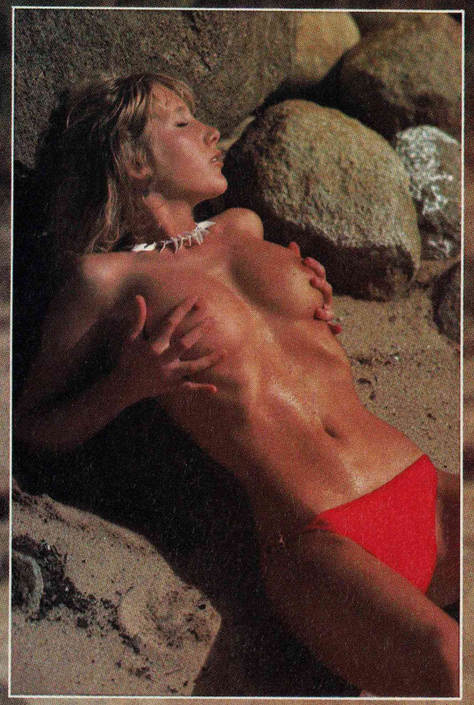


"Summer is never long enough for me. I can take a lot more of this life — lying in the sun wearing nothing but suntan oil."



"I have never been self-conscious about people looking at me. Perhaps that's why I'd like to try acting as a career. I feel that there's a real future for me on the stage."

THE LUSH tropical vegetation of Fitzroy Island made the ideal backdrop for our December nymphet, and photographer Colin Stead had a fairly easy task finding great locations. The hinterland around Cairns also provided a ready stage, with its lush rainforests and mountain streams rushing eastwards through rugged scythes in the mountains. It was in such a gorge that our beach baby took time to frolic in a typically secluded setting far removed from the cares of everyday living. With added attractions like Amanda, Fitzroy Island can hardly miss — not that it needs much of a boost. With golden bodies like hers glistening on the sands, the Queensland summer looks properly decked for the holiday season.



"It's not that I'm an exhibitionist — it's just that sunshine and surf are much more enjoyable without clothes. I feel completely uninhibited."

"Sometimes, I like to get away from the crowd and find some seclusion to recharge my energy levels. The beach is the place where I relax."

OUR BLONDE, blue-eyed Playmate finds the beach the ultimate place in which to relax, particularly if it happens to be a secluded spot far away from the madding crowd. Her energy levels restored, Amanda can face the theatrical world of Sydney where she wants to make her mark. We think our Miss December has already done it.

MISS DECEMBER
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH
Amanda Dole

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Amanda Dole

BUST: 35 WAIST: 24 HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 5 6" WEIGHT: 8 stone SIGN: Aquarius

BIRTH DATE: 31/1/65 BIRTHPLACE: Sydney

GOALS: To make a success of my acting & live life to its fullest, not only for myself but for someone whom I loved.

TURN-ONS: Poetry, music, sun & surf, sports cars (especially MGs). having people & being with friends

TURN-OFFS: The cold, false smiles, conseruative people

FAVORITE BOOKS: Catcher in the Rye, 1984, Romeo and Juliet, anything by Charles Dickens or Woody Allen.

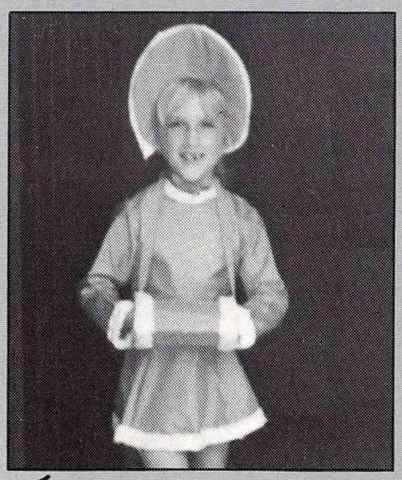
FAVORITE POETS: Percy Shelley, T.S Eliot.

FAVORITE MOVIES: Date with a lonely Girl - T.R Bastrin, Tommy, Clockwork Orange, Any Woody Allen or Monty Python

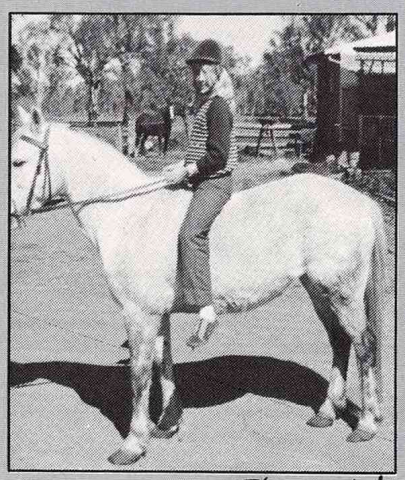
FAVORITE PERFORMERS: Mick Jagger, Woody Allen, The Two Bonnies, Cheech and Chong.

SECRET DREAM: To look back on life and say "I thought it, I dreamt it and I did it".

9 months & ready to take on the world



7 years - my first Ballet performance



12 years - The old knack that wouldn't budge.

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

"Now, now," murmured the gynaecologist soothingly to his obviously agitated patient. "There's really nothing to this, and it will soon be over. Tell me, haven't you ever been examined like this before?"

"Yes, I have," gulped the young lady, "but never by a doctor."

When I was small, my mother told me my future husband's penis would grow like a tree before he planted it in me," the recent bride confided to a close friend, "but every time I see Arnold's supposed erection, I feel like shouting 'Bonsai!' "

Our unabashed dictionary defines *biscuspid* as an AC/DC dentist.

"Hello, horny," breathed the obscene phone caller. "If you can guess what I've got in my hand you can have a piece of the action."

"Listen, mug," replied his target, "if you can hold it in one hand, I'm not interested."

A mathematician named Hall,
Has a hexahedronical ball,
And the cube of its weight
Times his penis, plus eight,
Is his phone number — give him a call.

A woman went to her doctor and confessed she had a vibrator firmly wedged in her vagina. After examining her, the doctor said: "Madam, I'm sorry to have to tell you that an operation will be necessary to remove it, and will cost you around $3000."

"Remove it?" shrieked the woman. "Hell, I just want you to change the batteries."

"My wife treats me like a dog," complained the husband. "Whenever I get into bed with her, she rolls over and plays dead."

"But this isn't an engagement ring," protested the pretty young thing. "It's just a tiny unset diamond."

"I know, honey," said her fiance, "but it'll be mounted the day after you are."

"I'd like some deodorant," the man told the assistant in the chemist's shop.

"Ball or aerosol?" she asked.

"Neither," said the customer, indignantly. "Just the stuff for underarms."

Did you hear the one about the flasher who thought about retiring, but decided to stick it out for just one more year?

"My boyfriend and I saw a great picture at the drive-in the other night," one girl told another. "It was very emotional and moving. I kept getting this lump in my throat all through the performance."

"It sounds impressive," commented the friend. "Tell me, though, Ruthie, how did you find time to watch the movie?"

"Say, what's a Breathalyser?" one tavern patron asked another.

"I'd describe it as a bag that tells you when you've drunk too much," answered his fellow beer buff.

"Well, whaddaya know?" said the questioner, "I've been married to one of those for years and years now."

"Have you heard about the latest male contraceptive pill? You put it in your shoe and it makes you limp!

"Harvey the Hustler went into the theatrical agent's office and said: "I've got this fantastic woman outside. She's got the greatest figure in the world. It's 99-28-36."

"99-28-36?" said the agent, nearly swallowing his cigar. "Stupendous! What can she do?"

"Well," said Harvey, "with a little bit of help, she can sit up."

Our unabashed dictionary defines *felatio* as a taste of things to come.

The country doctor was due to give the town young women's club a lecture on sexual satisfaction, but thought it best to keep the matter from his wife, so told her he would be speaking on aeronautics. The following day, one of the bright young things stopped his wife in the street and congratulated her on the doctor's lecture.

"You're lucky to have such an expert for a husband," she said.

"Funny you should call him an expert," said the doctor's wife. "He's only been up twice and he was sick both times."

Heard a funny one lately? Send it to Party Jokes Editor, Australian PLAYBOY, *Box 4088, GPO Sydney, 2001. We'll pay $25 for jokes used.*

"I don't care if you are in a time warp. You've had your twenty bucks worth!"

WORLD'S MOST INCREDIBLE DAREDEVILS

IN 1933, H.W. Tilman decided that he'd like to check out beaches in the Cameroon. Only problem was, at that moment Tilman happened to be at his beach-front home in Mombasa, almost 5000 kilometres distant. To reach the Cameroon's sandy shore required the first east-to-west crossing of Africa through the dense, uncharted jungles of both Uganda and the Congo. Tilman was undeterred. Alone on his bicycle, armed only with a machete, he rode off into the sunset in gaiters and tweed jacket, pausing each afternoon at four for tea. Three months

Article by Geoffrey Tabin

Illustration by Peter Castle

later, he reached his destination. At the age of 69, with 50 years of exploration, both in Africa and the Himalayas, behind him, the irrepressible old codger then bought a boat and sailed it around the world, with a detour to the South Pole, which he reached at the age of 72.

The decline of the British Empire and an increasingly well-charted globe have made the Tilmans of this world a dying breed. Once, an Oxford education, tweed trousers, two pairs of socks and a heavy coat were all a British-gentleman explorer needed to make an all-out assault on the summit of Mt Everest. These days it seems to require a six-figure budget, international sponsorship and a small army of Sherpas to get that far. Indeed, "the right stuff", as Tom Wolfe's test pilots called it, is in distressingly short supply. Or seems to be, anyway, until you cast your eye toward one David Kirke and that cradle of the eccentric idle rich, the university town of Oxford.

Kirke does not look like an adventurer or a hero of any kind. In fact, seen in his army-surplus coat (secured with safety pins) after a typical Friday evening at a smoky Oxford pub called The Bear, he looks as though he might need help walking home. With a slight beer drinker's paunch, bristling gray-flecked beard topped by bulging eyes and receding brown curls, he seems the quintessential upper-class twit gone to seed. Which he is. But he also happens to be the roguish kingpin of the world's only club devoted exclusively to those sports and diversions so dangerous, so improbable, so utterly outlandish that no one else would even *think* of them, let alone try them. As founder, director, idea man and prime mover of the Oxford Dangerous Sports Club, Kirke is out to prove that the call of the wild still comes through loud and clear.

In this age of electric socks and in-flight entertainment, he means to demonstrate that neither skill nor experience is needed to set a hang-gliding record, fly an aircraft, climb a mountain, scale a live volcano or leap from a high-speed train. As Kirke carries his celebration of the dilettante to manic extremes, his actions tend to confirm what his friends cheerfully admit: that he is, by usual standards, deranged.

Even in his upbringing, the 34-year-old Kirke seems to have been moulded as a Victorian adventurer. With an education in self-reliance through his early years, Kirke proceeded, well prepared, to Oxford. He spent three undistinguished years there, as befits a man of good taste, leaving with a "gentleman's third" in English literature to take up journalism in London. Whatever the initial romance of a profession that involved watching other people do exciting things, Kirke found early on that he much preferred being watched himself. Helped by the fact that nobody seemed to think he was destined to be a great journalist, Kirke packed his bags in 1970 and returned to Oxford, that haunt of great eccentrics and brilliant cranks in which Britain abounds.

There, with Christopher Baker and Ed Hulton, two friends who share a bit of that wild gleam that lights Kirke's eyes, he set about experimenting with adventure. Where some Oxonians become self-taught experts in dead languages or Australian wines, he would become the world expert on what he rather eccentrically calls life-questioning sport.

The first step was to sample the traditional dangerous sports. During the summer of 1977, with no expertise

"They would not allow science to interfere with the spirit of their challenge to nature so there would always be an element of uncertainty."

and little equipment, Kirke clambered to the top of the Matterhorn. That August, without ceremony or training, he and Baker launched themselves down the Landquart in Switzerland, thus becoming the greenest of novices ever to survive what is probably Europe's most treacherous stretch of white water.

The reckless successes began piling up as Kirke, fired by his growing enthusiasm for danger, looked for ever greater potential disasters. Later that summer, though he lacked a pilot's licence, he somehow rented a small aircraft, which he managed to get airborne and return safely to earth without ever having flown one of the contraptions before.

The birth of the Oxford Dangerous Sports Club, however, was delayed until October, when Kirke planned his first group activity: a champagne brunch for six, followed by a jump from Rockall, a 25-metre sea stack overlooking the North Channel off the coast of Scotland. After a climb that was treacherous in itself, Kirke's little party looked down to where the ebb and flow of crashing waves created a cycle of filling and emptying pools — one instant safely full, the next nothing but bare rock for a diver to land on. Deciding that discretion was indeed the better part of valor, several would-be members of Kirke's new club turned around and risked the climb back down. Two people finally jumped, and Kirke himself dived head first into the freezing water, though he had never even jumped from a high board before. All that finally marred this true baptism of the club was that the boys already knew how to swim.

The following summer, for Kirke and his club, was devoted to experimentation. Having, by then, tried all traditional dangerous sports of importance, they felt it was time to move on, to invent *new* ones. In addition to the simple thrill that novelty provided — and it was becoming increasingly hard to thrill Kirke — there was an increased element of risk involved. Danger was relatively easy to evaluate when one knew what had happened before; it assumed mysterious dimensions, however, when the odds were unknown. It was about that time that the calculations for all the group's events — the crucial calculations of speed, velocity, impact and so forth that determined survivability — were turned over to Simon Keeling and Alan Weston, two of Kirke's buddies who had taken their respective Oxford degrees in engineering and computing, and who thus could be counted on to produce reasonably reliable estimates. However, because the dangerous sportsmen were not about to let the tedious certitude of modern science interfere with the spirit of their challenge to nature, they adhered to a policy of undertaking only adventures never before attempted, so that there would always be an element of uncertainty involved.

Thus did various bobsled runs in France and Switzerland take on new dimensions in the summer of 1979, when negotiated atop a block of ice fitted with a seat. Wheelchairs turned nearly lethal as they were moved out of hospital corridors and on to steep hillsides for the purpose of quick descent. During the traditional running of the bulls through the narrow Spanish streets of Pamplona, Kirke and company substituted skate boards for foot speed. And in what was planned as the climax of the summer, the tuxedo-clad sportsmen were to have parachuted into the Longleat Animal Park's lion enclosure, each armed with a revolver containing only one bullet. The fact that this event never came off probably had more to do with lack of organisation than with lack of nerve.

Exactly what makes Kirke tread the edge of the great abyss with such

regularity is impossible to say for sure. When he is not risking a final farewell, his daily schedule borders on the unbearably routine — a sort of burlesque of life in Oxford. Emerging every day about noon from his chaotic apartment, where books are strewn all over and trophies of dangerous ventures litter the shelves, he ambles to the centre of town in time for lunch at The Bear. There, surrounded by his cronies, the world's most daring sportsman sits eating omelettes and drinking pints of beer until the sun goes down. Then it's off to his club, where he can sit in a leather wing chair and read the papers with England's finest, warmed by frequent doses of good Scotch.

Now, admittedly, this is not the regimen of either genius or fitness. And, indeed, Kirke takes unconcealed pride in the fact that he is usually at least five years the senior of his fellow Dangerous Sports Club members and apparently in the worst shape of all. He also takes pride in the fact that while climbing Kilimanjaro, he went straight to the 6300-metre summit without missing a stride, while his young companions wheezed and gasped their way from behind.

The secret of his stamina and of his remarkable ability to survive the unsurvivable is neither training nor any particular talent, but a psychological toughness that produces unparallelled performances through the sheer force of his will. Kirke assumes he *will* survive and, believing it, he does. With heroes of the era of the amateur — with men like Scott in the Antarctic and Stanley in Africa — he shares a mental determination that enables him to endure horrendous pain and to think clearly in the most disconcerting of crises. "Everyone has a certain level of anxiety," he says. "I direct my anxiety into the events I attempt. The rest of my life is very calm."

Maybe so, but to the impartial observer, Kirke's behavior is not as calm as he claims. A man who prefers extremes in every aspect of life, Kirke replaces the disintegrating army coat and safety pins each evening with an equally battered black tie and tails. He throws a succession of extravagant parties that seems to keep him stylishly in the hole. It may ultimately be more accurate to say that Kirke's "events" are the safety valve for anxieties and preoccupations that are larger than life.

But whatever the cause, there can be no doubt that by autumn of 1978, the manic gleam in Kirke's eyes had inspired a full-fledged organisation of dangerous sportsmen and assorted hangers-on. With the trio of Baker, Weston and Keeling forming the core of the club around Kirke, the sportsmen were beginning to stir interest in wider circles. Since their personal resources were rapidly dwindling and their schemes growing exponentially more expensive, that was a very good thing. Late in 1978, they enlisted the support of an independent film-production company and the BBC for a hang-gliding expedition off Mt Kilimanjaro. Kirke had never bothered to master the sport, of course, but his smooth talking and confident air convinced the men holding the purse strings that he was champion.

The expedition served to clinch Kirke's status as a legend among the *cognoscenti* and, at the same time, proved a disaster for the BBC. Loaded down with hang-gliding apparatus, supplies and the obligatory formalwear, two of Kirke's companions abandoned the attempt during the tortuous ascent. Weston, the only experienced hang glider in the group, got to the top but crashed on take-off,

"Kirke takes pride in the fact that while climbing Kilimanjaro, he went straight to the 6300-metre summit without missing a stride."

destroying his glider and injuring his ankle. Keeling, meanwhile, managed a take-off, then bounced his wingtip off the mountainside, swooped upward and then screamed back toward earth in a nylon and metal-tubed power dive leftward. The BBC captured approximately 12 seconds of filmed flight, which depicted the Kirke posterior disappearing into surrounding clouds. But what was the end of a short film clip best forgotten by the BBC was only the beginning for Kirke. Once enveloped by clouds, he continued to fly through the mist without a compass or an altimeter, eventually coming in for a gentle landing on a coffee plantation 40 kilometres away.

The Kilimanjaro exploit proved to be a crucial watershed in the history of dangerous sports. With it came a greater cohesiveness of the group and, symbolic of that new clubbiness, an official club tie (a silver wheelchair on black background). It also established the club as a media darling — and, just as important, convinced the sportsmen that anything they did was a media event. Kirke continued to indulge a mania for secrecy about preparations for the group's events, but he was increasingly receptive to the idea of coverage once the events were under way, particularly if that meant money. And, finally, it was Kilimanjaro that first prompted him to speculate seriously about what was to become the club's most spectacular undertaking — a modern variation on an ancient puberty ritual that would be suitable for mass-media coverage.

Kirke's new scheme actually originated with natives in the highlands of New Guinea who, in a strange rite of passage, tie springy vines to their ankles, then leap from high trees. As they hurtle headfirst toward the ground, the vine snaps them to a mind-jolting halt just inches from the jungle floor. Kirke and Baker replaced the jungle vines with elastic bungee cords, similar to the straps used to hold books on the back of a bicycle but strong enough to bring supersonic jet fighters to a stop on the decks of aircraft carriers. And it would not be jungle trees the sportsmen would leap from but high bridges — preferably over rivers.

The first jump, on April Fools' Day, 1979, was from England's highest suspension bridge, the Clifton Bridge in Bristol. One end of the bungee was tied to the bridge, the other to an improvised harness designed by Keeling and Weston. With champagne toasts, Kirke, Weston, Keeling and Tim Hunt — younger brother of champion race-car driver James Hunt — all stepped off. Like tuxedo-clad yo-yos, the dangerous sportsmen dropped the full length of their cords, stretched another 33 metres waterward and bounced back up nearly 66 metres then it was down and up and down again, in bounces of decreasing magnitude, until they hung, limp but ecstatic, 40 metres below the bridge. It was only after Weston had popped the cork on the celebratory champagne he'd carried along on the leap that the remaining members of the party hauled them back up to the bridge.

Arrested and photographed, the sportsmen had achieved both of their objectives: the group had garnered national publicity and all four jumpers were alive, which proved their new sport could be played. After another trial leap that September from the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, Kirke decided they were ready for the big time.

What he had his eye on was nothing less that the world's highest suspension bridge. Like a toothpick slung across a funnel, the Royal Gorge Bridge spans that 350-metre gorge over the Arkansas River just outside Canyon City, Colorado. The gap, which is about 250 metres at the top,

narrows to a mere 30 metres at the base. Without even having seen the bridge, the sportsmen were eager to jump from it. Keeling and Weston got to work on their computations. After much deliberation, they announced that a bungee cord 200 metres long, with Kirke attached, could be expected to stretch approximately that distance again; Kirke would be subjected to a force of five *g*s and would pass out on the rebound.

Kirke was intrigued. "This will require total control, mental and physical, and you won't know the result until you wake up. How excellent!" he exclaimed. "If you do everything correctly up to the point you pass out, then you'll survive, but if you don't — if you make a mistake — then you'll die not even feeling your own death." But even as they indulged in that kind of existential reflection, Kirke and his friends lost no time wrapping up the publicity and also the dollar side of the expedition.

Back in 1979, *That's Incredible!*, the now-notorious American TV show that specialises in video-taping self-inflicted mutilation for mass consumption, had a lot less to its discredit than it does now. Kirke was convinced that anything called *That's Incredible!* simply had to need his kind of adventure. As it turned out, he was right.

Kirke and the producers agreed on an $18,000 fee to fill the club's coffers. Fill them, that is, so they could be emptied again. For, in the spirit of the club, Kirke ordained that every cent of the take would be spent on the jump itself and associated celebration.

The television company scheduled the filming for March 6 and requested three jumpers. Kirke decided to do it his way or not at all. He insisted on flying the whole club over, and most of them converged on London first for a pre-flight party. From Paris came Hunt and Hubert Gibbs, a shy young musician who was to be the jump's official pianist. From Ireland came ex-Oxonian Anthony Murphy and his wife. Oxford yielded Murphy's brother Rob, Kirke and me — an experienced rock-climber, in charge of tying the bungee cords.

Finally, tired and drunk from their various preliminary celebrations, the party converged on San Francisco five days before the scheduled jump. Paul Foulon, Weston's stepbrother and the group's second American, drove down from Portland in his utility — bringing with him the bungees used in the Golden Gate jump the year before.

We arrived in Canyon City, 16 kilometres outside Royal Gorge, one day before the jump. Up to that point, the club had been a bit worried about how seriously *That's Incredible!* was going to take its sport. One look at producer Alan Landsburg's preparations and all were reassured. In addition to a dozen cameramen, a helicopter had been rented for some aerial shots. Eyeing the chopper wistfully, Kirke said: "There may be some tangible benefits from this television company if I can persuade them to give me a go with their helicopter."

At the site, the boys took a look around — and down. Standing atop the wind-swept bridge, 350 metres above what looked like a pencil line of river, the club looked for the first time just the slightest bit pensive. It was a long way down.

No time for regrets now, thought Kirke, and he took the rest of the Brits off for early-afternoon drinks among the natives of Canyon City, while the two Americans on the team set to work tying on the cords that would be used in the next day's jump.

It was a tricky business. In previous jumps, Kirke had explained, to

"If you do everything correctly up to the point where you pass out, you'll survive, but if you don't, if you make a mistake . . ."

my horror, they had used seven-millimetre yachting rope and overhand knots to secure the bungee cord to the bridge. With that sort of knot tying, the jumpers would have about a 50 percent chance of dropping directly into the river below. So we spent eight hours constructing a line from two strands of 17-millimetre bungee cord, then tying the line into a carefully designed mountaineering-rope anchor that would secure the cords while preventing a fatal, frictive rub between the bungee cord and the bridge. Meanwhile, a piano was rented for Gibbs. It began to look as though the event would come off.

Everyone was "quite keen" to be the first off the bridge. Kirke decided to have five jumpers leap simultaneously, on cords spaced evenly along the bridge. Kirke, in the middle, would be on a 138-metre length. Weston and Hunt would flank him on 80-metre lengths, leaving the outside positions for the novices (Foulon and me) on 40-metre cords.

The biggest risk was Kirke's. Dangling at the end of 333-metres of line to within a metre of the water, he would be subject to vastly widened pendulum swings. The slightest breeze from the wrong direction could blow him off course and slap him into a sheer granite face only 10 metres away at the base. "Strawberry jam spread on rock" was Weston's cheerful description of the probable result of an error in his calculations.

Another problem was the force of gravity, and, again, Kirke was to be most affected. Exactly how much force he would be exposed to if all went well, no one really knew. The Weston-Keeling estimate of five *g*s seemed plausible, but no one would have been surprised if they'd been off by 200 percent. Astronauts in their specially designed suits pass out with a force of six *g*s. No one wanted to think what would happen if any of the jumpers was head-down when the *g* force built up.

All in all, this was unmistakably a Dangerous Sports Club presentation: no one knew to precisely what length the bungee cords would stretch on a jump from this height. Moreover, no one had really tried to find out. Not knowing, and not wanting to know, was what the club was all about.

Our celebration lasted until three the next morning. The jump was planned for 8am in order to minimise the breezes that could turn Kirke into a pulp; but it wasn't until nine that the first of the club staggered in. We quickly set up a portable bar right next to the ambulance thoughtfully provided by *That's Incredible!* Missing members of the club were pulled from bed at 11 o'clock but still had to dress for the event.

Overhead, the copter blades chopped ominously, and a crowd started to gather. Five characters dressed as game-show MCs were about to fling themselves off the bridge. This promised to be better than a hanging.

At noon, Kirke finally arrived, had a drink and was promptly approached by the bridge authorities. They wanted him to sign forms relieving them of all responsibility. His hand trembled as he took the pen. He had to steady himself before he signed. No one had ever seen Kirke shake before.

Looking down at the looped bungee cords dangling off the bridge and blowing gently in the wind, the sportsters were beginning to think quite seriously about getting hurt, and to think especially that if anyone was going to get hurt, it would very likely be Kirke himself.

Hearing that Weston and Keeling had estimated that he would end up within three metres of the river, Kirke approached me and said: "Geoff, old man, I realise you have worked hard on the preparations, but is it still possible to extend my rope by one and a half metres? I'm quite keen to just touch the bottom before bouncing up." When it was pointed out to him that he was likely to be unconscious, he decided to reconcile himself to the three-metre margin.

Finally, after posing for a picture next to the ambulance, the group began to get ready. Beyond having a few more drinks, that involved my tying each of them into a full body harness and then attaching that to the bungee cord.

The club maintains a tradition of never checking its own knots, and only Foulon, who was wearing a cowboy hat with his tuxedo, was gauche enough to inspect his own harness. Weston, dressed in a grey morning suit and club tie, seemed worried as he was secured to his bungee, calling for "more drink, please". He lit a large Havana cigar and puffed nervously while the others were readied. Next to be tied in was Hunt, who sported a black tux with tails and a grey top hat secured under his chin.

Now, only minutes before leaping into the unknown, Kirke was moving slowly. Weston impatiently cried out: "*Please* get to your rope, David. I can't wait much longer. I have to jump off soon."

Kirke nodded and solemnly walked to the long cord in the middle. "Have a good one, old boy," he called to Weston. As I tied him into his harness, he tried to light his pipe, but his hands shook too much to strike the match. Dressed in a black morning suit with tails, a black-velvet top hat and the club tie, he allowed one of the cameramen to assist him with a light. He quickly got control of himself and joked that the harness was too tight. "I really must go on a diet!" he exclaimed. With Gibbs at the piano setting the mood, I finished Kirke's knots and headed for my own rope. It was almost three o'clock.

Walking from Kirke to my place at the side, I was struck by the reality of what I was about to do. Until that moment, I had been so absorbed in the partying and preparations that I had not really worried about my own jump. Suddenly, there was nothing more I could do for the others.

Now it was my ass out on the line. The sounds of classical piano and helicopter blades were replaced in my ears by the pounding of my heart. I gave a final glance at my comrades, then I looked down.

Nearly 350 metres below, the river looked like a thread. The canyon walls seemed only centimetres apart. I trusted the bungee cords and the knot, I had tied. I was the only one using a safety line — a security measure that Kirke considered highly unethical. Rationally, I knew I would be safe; yet I was gradually enveloped by fear. I tried to calmly remind myself that I'd been subjected to more danger than this climbing vertical rock walls. Just as I began to regain control of my trembling body, I was interrupted by a cameraman who said: "Boy, aren't you afraid that there safety rope will wrap around your neck as you bounce up and hang you as you fall back down?"

I hadn't been, but suddenly I was. My testicles quickly receded into the safety of my body. My entire groin tightened. My mind raced incoherently. The others were already over the retaining fence. I clambered after them while my panicked brain screamed, "No!"

For a moment, we paused on the farthest supports. It was reassuring, at least, to see how much farther Kirke's cords hung down into space, blowing gently at the limit of my vision. All sound ceased. Time stood

"I hadn't been afraid, but suddenly I was. My testicles receded into my body, and my entire groin tightened. Then it was time to jump."

still. Kirke raised his hand, signaled one . . . two . . . three, then stepped calmly into the air.

I pushed off and my mind immediately signaled: "Error!" Like a cartoon figure, I desperately tried to walk back to the bridge while hanging motionless in the air. Then I fell.

My mind stopped. My heart stopped. The only thing moving was my body, free-falling into the void. My life became calm as I came to a gentle stop 100 metres down — only to be catapulted violently skyward. Accelerating upward, totally out of control, I was elated. The bungee had held. I slowed to a stop again, now 15 metres below the bridge. Regaining body control, I was able to turn and see the other jumpers. Foulon, at the far side, was at the same height I was. Far below, Weston was beginning his first upward bounce. Kirke was still falling, a dot disappearing in the abyss. I watched them all during my next descent, noting happily that no one had become strawberry jam. I thoroughly enjoyed my last few bounces, trying several somersaults as I rose and fell.

Soon we were all hanging like spiders, suspended between heaven and earth in a giant V. The television helicopter circled us and we waved to it and to one another, thumbs up all around. It was now only a matter of waiting to be hoisted back up. Soon Hunt, Foulon, Weston and I were safely on the bridge. Foulon appropriately described the feeling for the television audience as "incredible".

Meanwhile, Kirke's cord proved to be making it impossible to pull him up. For nearly three hours, he hung 300 metres below us, without so much as an overcoat to protect him from the cold. With wind whipping up the canyon and the temperature near freezing, we knew he was in considerable pain. The harness would be cutting off circulation to his legs. The medical crew began to worry. Finally, we found a way to bring him up by pulling the bungee with a tow truck. When he reached the bridge. Kirke's only concern was the whereabouts of his prized top hat and pipe, both of which had been lost in his struggle to remain upright.

Kirke described the jump for the television cameras, saying such an experience "definitely gives one heightened appreciation for life." Privately, he admitted a slight disappointment with the event. The Weston-Keeling estimates had been way off. He hadn't passed out and had stopped a good 33 metres short of the water. "Quite the worst of it was, I didn't get a good bounce," he said. "My cords stretched and stopped."

For most of them, the Dangerous Sports Club is only an occasional diversion, so this was a rare event, to be savored and prolonged. Only Kirke has made the club a way of life, moving from one event to the next. Recently, he made the first motorised-hang glider crossing of the English Channel, non-stop from London to Paris. Since the Frenchman Jean Marc Bovier surpassed his high-altitude hang-gliding record, Kirke has been trying to talk his way on to an expedition to the peak of Mt Everest.

"I shall hang-glide off Everest by 1985," he predicts, "even if I must charter a helicopter to the summit." He is also planning "an extremely festive outing" for his friends in a padded school bus floating over Niagara Falls. His top priority, however, is to set the world free-fall record by parachuting from a helium balloon at 43,000 metres. It will require a pressurised suit to keep his blood from boiling and a temperature-control device to prevent his freezing in space or burning up on re-entry to the atmosphere. Weston and Keeling are already at work on the designs.

TWILIGHT OF THE AUSSIE HERO

DAWN FRASER, HERB ELLIOTT, DON BRADMAN, ROD LAVER, LIONEL ROSE, BETTY CUTHBERT—WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Article by Ian Wooldridge

SWINGING out over Botany Bay and then banking north for London and home always fills me with conflicting emotions. Short of fleeing some nuclear holocaust, I couldn't contemplate living permanently in Australia. Don't ask me why. It's the gut reaction of an incurable Little Englander, I suppose. On the other hand, I've had a love affair with the place since the first of my seven visits 18 years ago. I fell for the vigor, the frankness, the she's-right-mate kind of

Illustration by Tony Rafty

optimism, the over-friendliness and the lack of class structure, noticeable everywhere outside certain self-designated high-caste and boringly neat suburbs around Melbourne. Some of my best friends, as the saying goes, are Australians, and to spend four months a year with them, while winter ravages Europe, is paradise.

I first went to Australia as a member of that most despised band of marauding trouble-stirrers — the Pommy cricket writers. More recently, it has been as a general sports-writer or TV reporter. The credentials, such as they are, are necessary since it is only polite to put your cards on the table if you propose to get personal about your host. All too often, and particularly in a society as bristlingly sensitive to criticism as Australia, concerned observation can be mistaken for gratuitous rudeness. I ran into that problem once in Kalgoorlie, from where, enchanted by all the wrought-iron balconies and noisy saloons, and the rumor that it saw no reason to shut down the last legalised brothel in the entire Commonwealth, I wrote a despatch to the *London Daily Mail,* which included the aside: "This is the kind of town where you expect to see a gunfight on every corner."

This was spotted by some Australian journalist in Fleet Street, who instantly shot the words back — but with a subtle twist. I had, he maintained, besmirched Kalgoorlie's good name in the eyes of the world by reporting that, *a la* Carson City, guys with six-shooters were drilling holes through the local populace every drunken night of the week. The *Kalgoorlie Miner* printed it, along with some stinging editorial comment, and if it hadn't been for getting very drunk that night with a flying doctor, life would hardly have been worth living for the rest of my stay.

However, flying doctors and distorting journalists are not what this piece is about. The preamble is because it takes more brazen effrontery than I possess to march straight on to this page and shout: "Australia, what's happening to you? You are becoming fat and spotty and lethargic. You are losing your fierce national pride. You are becoming a nation of watchers — not doers. You are beginning to remind me of those American tourists who used to blockade the streets of London in the 1960s, loud check trousers bulging over their burden of fast-food carbohydrates, knees long disappeared into a position of total eclipse."

Before you stiffen with outrage, let me concede two points: First, during my most recent visit to Australia, I never ventured beyond the suburbs of Sydney and am well aware that out there, in the great red yonder, there are still Chips Rafferty-looking men throttling snakes left-handed. Second, I would be less than perceptive if I were not aware that the last pulpit from which you want to hear unsolicited criticism is Britain, where our own national decline makes the fall of the Roman Empire look like a strategic withdrawal. Britain is now the home of bloody-minded recalcitrance, work-shy abrasiveness and leukaemic apathy. We sit doing our football pools and filling out social security forms while our shipyards stand silent and the rust slowly creeps over our motor industry.

That said, may I now roll up my sleeves and get to work on Australia?

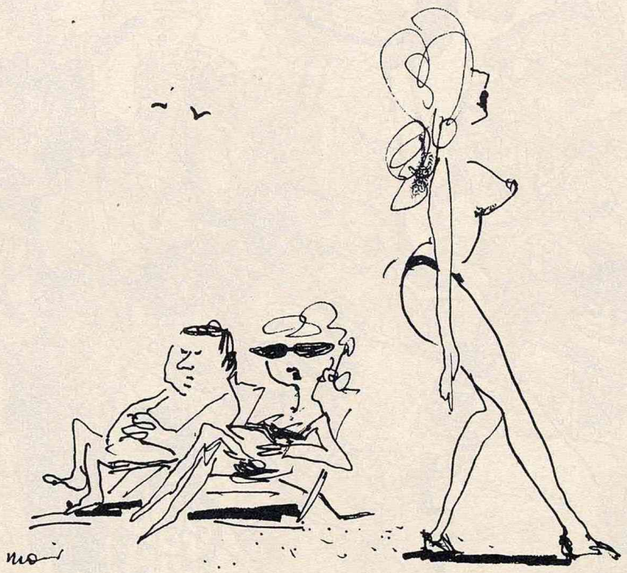
Well, it's different, that's for sure. Back in the early '60s, to order a dry martini in Lennon's in Brisbane was tantamount to importuning the barman; to ask for a beer in Adelaide on a Sunday was to be made to feel like the prodigal son on his outward journey; to request a steak on the blue side of rare in the Adelphi Hotel, Perth, was to be seen as less eccentric than sheerly obscene; to ask for a copy of *Portnoy's Complaint* in a bookshop around Kings Cross in Sydney was to risk a quick call to the vice squad. I know that to be true since my wife did precisely that in search of a birthday present for a friend, who was spectacularly not into onanism. The assistant was too shocked to be apologetic. "I'm afraid we don't have *that,*" she said meaningfully, "but we do have *this.*"

This turned out to be a rectangular and formidably illustrated manual entitled *How to Improve the Size of Your Cock.* My wife bought it, presented it to my friend and has regretted it ever since. Also, in cinemas, it was noticeable that the audiences laughed in all the wrong places, and around town, people were intent on buying certain newspapers, ill-printed on what appeared to be blotting paper, containing allegedly true stories of such fatuity that they wouldn't have even fooled Little Red Riding Hood.

But my, how good you looked and how marvellous you were at sport. From the age of six, when we still celebrated Empire Day in Britain, and I used to dress as Don Bradman in the school pageant, Australians to me were all bronzed six-footers. The men all looked and walked with the easy confidence of Keith Miller, and the women should have won Miss World every year.

Beneath our veneer of condescension, we Brits, with our acne and everlasting colds, were suffering the agonies of an inferiority complex. And with reason. Whenever we tuned our radios in to the early morning test score from Sydney, Australia were eternally 541 for three (which you called three for 541). Australians dominated Wimbledon, and Peter Thomson virtually made the British Open golf championship his own. You swam like sharks right down to Shane Gould, and our sports pages were annexed by Herb Elliott, the Konrads and John Landy.

Even the midgets, like Bradman and Kenny Rosewall, used to leap up



"You're right, Stan. You do need glasses."

and box us round the ears, and always, from nowhere, unknowns were coming to Britain to stamp names like Laver and Hoad on our consciousness inside 12 weeks. In a perverse way, we rather enjoyed it, because Australia was the kid brother — irreverent, glowing with good health, in whom we took a genuine if slightly patronising pride. It was reassuring to know you kept yourself in shape in case we needed you in another war.

For decades, sport was Australia's window-front until suddenly, in the early '70s, the blinds came down. You can almost pinpoint the decline to the second week in July, 1971, when John Newcombe and Evonne Goolagong took their respective singles titles at Wimbledon. Australia hasn't done that since, and in other sporting paddocks, humiliation was piled upon disaster.

In cricket, albeit disrupted by the manoeuvrings of Kerry Packer, Australia has gone down to England sides memorable only for their mediocrity. In soccer, you lost 0-1 to somewhere called Iran, and in rugby union, you were felled by Tonga. The unthinkable eventually occurred at the Montreal Olympics in 1976. For the first time in 40 years, Australia failed to win a single gold medal, while East Germany, a nation virtually identical in population, swept the track.

Your Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, was very angry and hopped about promising full government inquiries. I made my own inquiries into those inquiries in Australia last year, and discovered they had never happened. Hobbled by financial government support even more parsimonious than Britain's, Australian sport staggered from defeat to disillusion.

Almost, that is. Simultaneously, the *Guinness Book of Records* was revealing a curious twist to the Australian character. More and more Australians were winning international acclaim for bizarre achievements — you captured the world record for gum-boot throwing; you stood head and shoulders above all others at hot water-bottle bursting; you left the world for dead at osculation; and a gentleman whose letter bore all the tones of seriousness wrote to a Sydney newspaper advocating a campaign to get rabbit-skinning raised to the status of an Olympic discipline.

What *was* happening to Australia, I wondered, as I strolled down to another three-hour lunch at Eliza's in Double Bay and discovered I was still among the first to leave?

Australians didn't even *look* the same. In Australia, sun-tans lessened the blow, but Australians in England now all looked like Rolf Harris instead of Ray Lindwall. Even the bronzed exterior couldn't conceal the fact that beams were getting broader and stomachs were sagging — not from beer, but the junk foods that yesterday's champions were now perpetually eating out of plastic cartons in every street at any hour.

I even toyed with the theory, probably two-thirds of the way down the second bottle of claret, that it was all essentially attributable to what you had done to your national anthem — not ours, since *God Save The Queen* isn't likely to do much for two million Greeks in Melbourne, but yours. *Waltzing Matilda* just heads off Germany's spine-chilling tune as the most stirring national anthem on earth. Yet instead you chose *Advance Australia Fair,* a dirge of such inspiration that it would send most sprinters to sleep in their starting blocks.

Fortunately, this flip conclusion could soon be rectified by the findings of a serious scientific team. Apparently, like me, Professor Cyril Renwick of the Hunter Valley Research Foundation, was equally concerned about why the dust was settling on the green and gold of Australian sport. He instituted interrogations of 2500 members of the national fauna and came up with the answer that 1600 of them not only didn't participate in any sport, but that they didn't even bother to go and watch it. They saw it on TV.

Even more alarming was the frank assertion by two out of every three adult Australian males that they believed exercise to be actually harmful. This, of course, has long been the case in Britain. We gave Africa back to the Africans because of all the walking involved. Even so, Australian joggers, despite the brilliance of the Down Under mornings, are outnumbered 10 to one in London and probably 80 to one in New York.

The paradox is that Australia is a much more pleasant place to live than it was 18 years ago. It would seem that Bradman's obsession, Elliott's determination and Laver's sole concern with winning have been replaced by a broader understanding that life is not necessarily bounded by the chalk lines of a tennis court or the white pickets of a cricket ground.

Your newspapers today are sharper, your cartoonists lead the world, your conversations no longer all start with Johnny Raper and end with Ron Barassi; your commercial radio is still as stridently bad as our's but your TV has verve and your film industry a brilliance uniquely Australian. I even lost a bet two years ago by claiming that Australia had never won the Nobel Prize for Literature. The fact is, of course, that you haven't yet made sufficient stunning films or won enough Nobel Prizes to convince the rest of the world that Australian emphases are changing.

We still look to the green and gold vest for reassurance that the kid brother is thriving, and are mortified to see him back there in the pack. That he's growing out of sport and found girls, outstanding wine and the arts instead, isn't something that has yet got through to the British skull.

"Aaahhh . . ."

Celibacy: The not-in thing

Humor by David Witt

LEARNING HOW to make love to a woman — or a man for that matter (although I draw the line at anything with four legs or scales) — is all very well, *but does it really go far enough?* Do the dime-a-dozen sex guides, the two-a-penny gynaecology texts, the $9.95-a-quart jars of that strange brown stuff which you rub — well, *you* mightn't actually, but I know this Japanese girl who does the most amazing things with that and a meat mallet, which she . . . Do they really come to grips with the daring new means of sexual self-expression in these giddy early years of what will surely become known as the Exotic '80s? In other words, do they still cut the mustard? Can these antiquated aids cope, for example, with the latest vogue in Sexuality Chic — to wit: *not* having sex?

Known variously as Asexuality, Anhedonism or The New Celibacy, this trend is currently sweeping through large towns like a new social disease. All of a sudden, dashing young rakes, roues and ravers are giving up wine, women and whatever to devote themselves to more fulfilling vices, like caligraphy and watching reruns of *The Odd Couple.* You probably know a few celibates. You might even be one yourself. "How can I tell?" I hear a desperate cry. Simple. According to Szladits and Festrunk (a couple of blokes I know), a celibate is a single person of childbearing years who chooses not to have sex — usually because of career pressures, or moral reasons, or simply to avoid cleaning up afterwards. It's a bold new step in male-female relations, and one to be encouraged, but like all new steps it will inevitably bring at first a few stumbles, trips and probably even nasty bruises to the shins. So here, to make the going a little easier, is a basic sex manual for the celibate — a guide to asexual practices which have all the guilt and tension of the usual rituals, but none of the exertion.

FOURPLAY

Any good card game will do here. Non-strip poker (also known as bridge) is a wonderful way to lead into a delightful evening of not having sex. Invite any three friends around (their sex doesn't matter, remember?), turn the lights down and the fan up, and if you play your cards right, you can spend the entire evening without so much as making sense to the person next to you — let alone touching him (or her). Another great fourplay technique to experiment with is double-dating with your parents.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Okay. You're all set. You're finally alone with that wonderful woman and you're wondering just how to go about an exciting evening of social intercourse. This is often a problem for most Australian men. We traditionally have difficulty starting conversations with — or putting the hard word on, as it's technically known — members of the opposite sex. It's really not that hard. Just take a deep breath to calm yourself, fix her with a steady, adoring gaze, and say: "Well, how are ya?" Now don't expect too much too soon. She might just stare at you a bit while she composes her reply. If your luck's in, however, she will probably grimace in a shy sort of way and say: "Orright." Then you're off. Be bold now, aggressive. You might even hit her straightaway with more questions like — "Wanna beer?"

Many celibate couples, however, get to this stage without too much trouble but soon find that lack of variety makes for a dull evening's intercourse. The answer here is to experiment with different positions. One of the most popular is to do it in front of the television set. Some people find this a bit impersonal but it has the advantage that after an hour in front of a TV, sex will be the last thing on your mind.

For more mature and adventurous couples, I would recommend a position that has been an Australian favorite for generations. In this one, the woman kneels on all fours on the bed, wearing nothing but an inflated inner tube and handcuffs, while the man is down at the pub bending his elbow.

AURAL SEX

This is the only kind of sex a celibate indulges in — and even that very rarely — so make sure that you choose your stories with extreme caution.

UNNATURAL ACTS

One thing you've probably noticed about celibates is that they take an unusual interest in their pets. This is called sublimation, and it is quite healthy. However, in many cases, celibates will go as far as taking large, overweight pets to bed with them for company. This is called heavy-petting and is unhealthy — particularly if the animal is an adult bison, as their personal habits leave a lot to be desired. One celibate of my acquaintance actually became engaged to an okapi he had known socially for some years, but was, of course, soon heartbroken when the ruminant broke it off to concentrate on her career as a hoofer with a road company. Mixed marriages rarely work.

GROUP SEX

Now this is where celibacy really comes into its own. The possible combinations of groups of people not having sex together is limitless. One of the most popular combinations in Australia is the *Menage a Onze* — also known as the First Eleven, or cricket team. It has the added spice of being entirely homosexual.

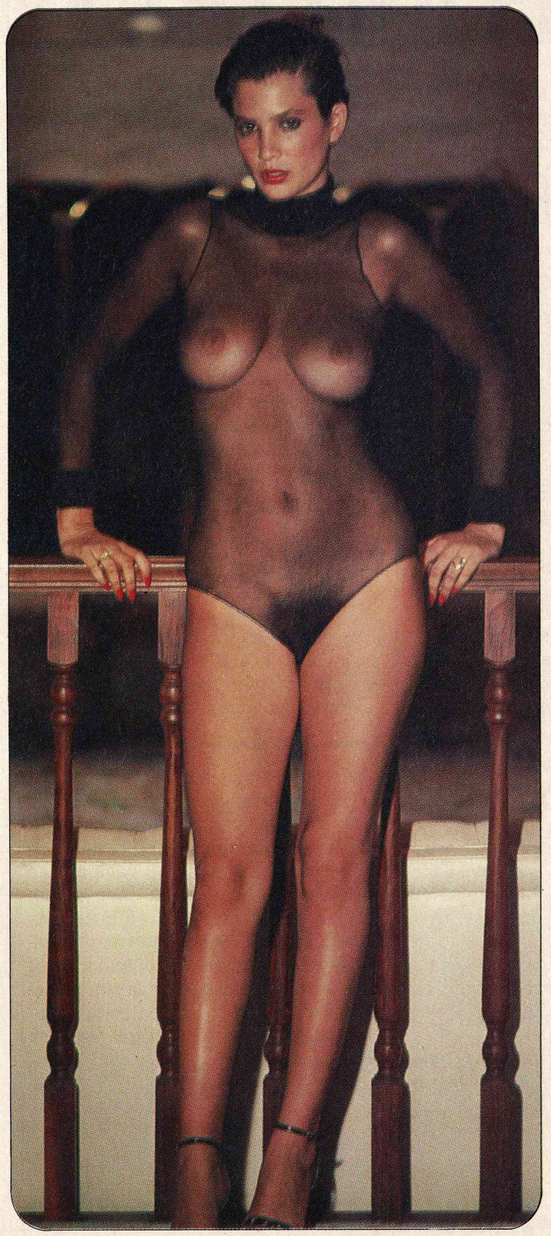
The largest known group of people ever not to have sex together was in 1913 just outside Montevideo, when 350,000 Catholic, Hindu and Muslim ascetics gathered for the first (and last) Inter-Faith Soccer Meet and Jamboree (Nairobi Jesuits beat the Rawalpindi Roisterers 29-0 in the finals). An attempt to break this record was made again in 1969 when about 500,000 people gathered in Woodstock, New York, to hold hands and listen to music. Unfortunately, it is known for certain that at least two people had sex during the revelries, and so the whole experiment was rendered null and void.

SEX AND DRUGS

Your best bet once again: *alcohol.* Just as this dandy little pick-me-up is an invaluable aid in seduction, so it is equally handy in avoiding it — if you just drink enough.

No sex manual can, of course, serve as the blueprint for a perfect love life. That will only come about through maturity, compromise and remembering to put the bloody top back on the toothpaste tube, Doreen! So it is with this short guide. A lot of questions about celibate sex practices necessarily remain unanswered, and a lot of issues unaddressed. For any more information about the celibate state and how to attain it, I suggest you ask your parents.

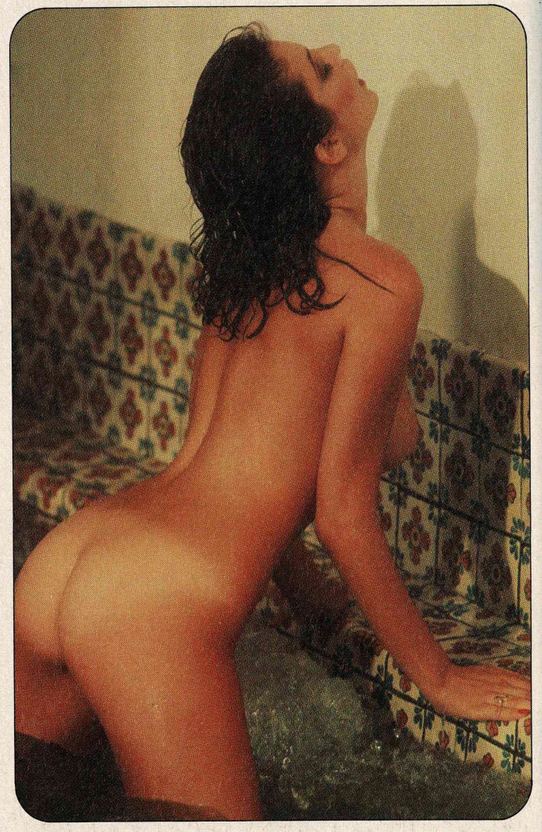
CHLOE



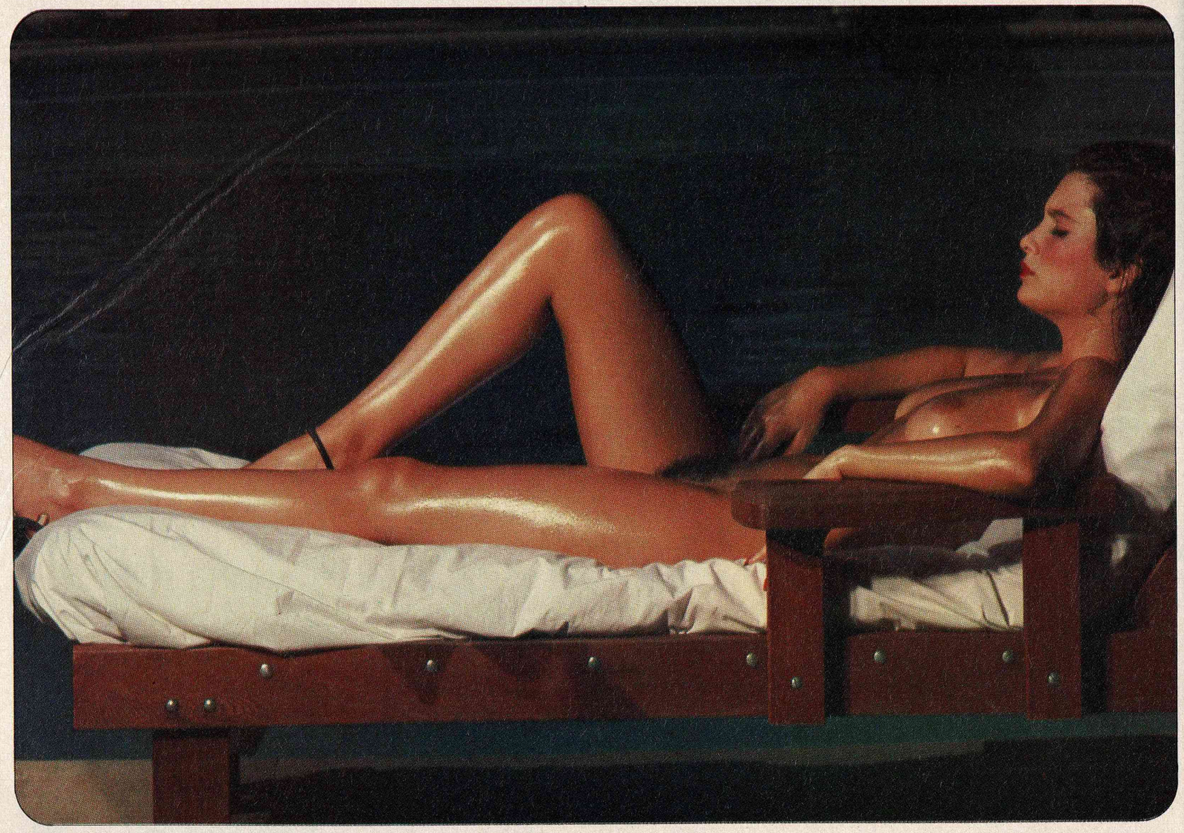
There's one Chloe we know who's been enshrined for aeons near the Acropolis, and there's another Chloe whom patrons of Melbourne's Young and Jackson's pub toast every day. And now there's a third deity with the same name who is just as worthy of your worship . . .

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF DUNAS

"I like men who are sincere and open, because these are qualities that carry over into the bedroom. They seem to care about my feelings as much as I do."



"People describe my looks as sultry and intense. That's fair, I guess, because that's the way I feel — deep inside."



"Lazing around out in the sun, I often pretend I'm a wild panther — hot, and dark, and dreaming of my next conquest."

Can Australia Stand The Test?

Article by John Benaud

DENNIS LILLEE was eating a banana at fine leg. In the middle of a Test match, mind you. He was actually on the field. Some would say that's the charm of cricket these days. The TV camera misses nothing.

During the fifth Test debacle against England, which came hard upon some similar nonsense in the third and fourth Tests, there was another telling piece of camera expertise. It involved that roughnut who keeps wickets like a king, Rodney Marsh. The scoreline read: Botham c Marsh b Whitney — for plenty.

Michael Whitney, a rookie in cricketing terms,who had bowled only a hundred or so overs at first class level, was playing in his first Test, which was a shock in itself because Whitney had not been chosen in the original Australian touring party. He was in because Rodney Hogg and Geoff Lawson, your original quickies, had gone in the backbone. And also, one can only assume, because his fairy godmother had somehow become a member of the team selection panel. I mean, why else would he be dragged away from second rate county cricket and into a Test side?

Anyway, Whitney became excited when Marsh held the catch. The fists were clenched, knuckle-whitening and reaching skywards on pumping elbows. If you have ever seen a soccer centre-forward score, you will know what I mean.

Botham, on the other hand, looked a bit bored. He couldn't even be bothered to wait for the umpire's raised forefinger, the crushing acknowledgement that he had in fact deflected the ball on its way to Marsh's gloves. Predictable. He'd already won a couple of those Man-of-the-Match awards, and here he was, plumb tuckered out after towelling the Aus-

Illustrated by Keith Davis-Farrell

tralians around Old Trafford to the upbeat tune of a hundred-plus in the same number of minutes.

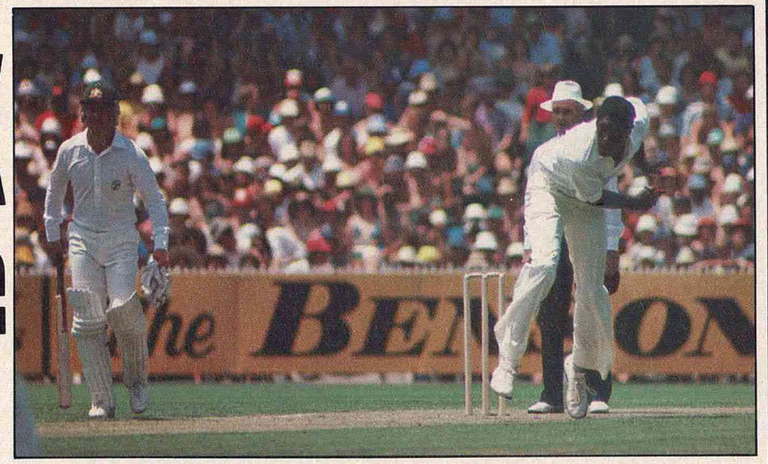
Now Marsh. Well, he looked a lot like one of my skiing buddies after losing his $100-plus lift ticket and getting back to the car park to find his chains gone and all his tyres let down. Sour. Sort of summed up the Test series, really, that scene — Whitney: raw, youthful exuberance. Botham: shucks, the hero. Marsh: the old campaigner, bitter, the Ashes gone, blown away in a cyclone of Australian sheer incompetence.

"Fair-dinkum" people like Rod Marsh. He's the sort of bloke who'd walk into a hardware store, see a spade, and say: "That's a spade." He was the Australian vice-captain on that England tour, but many of the game's more shrewd observers would say he should have been captain.

Problem: A few seasons ago, the austere gentlemen of the Australian Cricket Board invited Marsh to play a lot for only a little. He declined, because about the same time, the flamboyant Mr Kerry Packer invited Rodney and many of cricket's best men to play a lot for a lot.

And this caused the austere grey heads, who had traditionally run the game, to turn sort of puce and mutter: "Tch, tch." Even today, one cricket type who thinks that he's important

Six of the best



Raw power as Joel Garner (all 6ft 6in of him) unleashes another lethal delivery.

THE CONCENTRATION on pace bowling in modern cricket has pushed the art of batting into the background. If we are to see any domination by the willow this summer, the lead might be carried by these men:

VIV RICHARDS (West Indies): Antigua's greatest son. He wears the mantle of the world's No 1 bat, a title which he confirmed with a brilliant series against England earlier this year. He carved an aggressive 182 not out in the third Test, and finished the series with an average of 85 to push his career Test average to a remarkable 62.01. Richards has the strokeplay to dominate all types of bowling, but his standards are so high as to leave critics wondering whether he could possibly improve. Aussie sports fans caught a glimpse of his single-handed annihilation of the Surrey attack as he spearheaded Somerset's 1981 Benson and Hedges Cup final victory.

CLIVE LLOYD (West Indies): The West Indian captain put an end to further speculation about terminating his Test career by hitting form and inspiring his side to a resounding series win over the England tourists. The explosive left-hander backed a century with additional high scores to finish the series with an average of 76.60, second only to Richards. A veteran of the Test circuit, Lloyd has captained the side for a record 46 Tests, during which he has pushed his total run tally to 5556 at an average of 43.40. Still one of the hardest hitters in first-class cricket, he is a proponent of attacking batting and is not frightened to loft the ball when the chance is there.

JAVED MIANDAD (Pakistan): As his country's youngest captain, there will be very great responsibility on the shoulders of this gifted right hander. Not shy of pressure, he scored a Test century (167) in his debut against New Zealand in 1976-77, and just completed a great season for Glamorgan. In one county match, he slammed a mighty 153 not out and backed up in the second innings with 96. With seven centuries out of 2663 Test runs, he has a batting average of 57.89. If he can maintain form after the approaching encounters with the Aussies and the Windies, Javed will find himself ranking among the truly great contemporary batsmen.

ZAHEER ABBAS (Pakistan): The bespectacled 34-year-old Zaheer holds the world record of scoring a double hundred and a hundred in the same match an incredible four times. He burst on to the world scene with a memorable 274 against England at Edgbaston in 1976, and since has continued to topple records, either with Pakistan or for Gloucestershire. Zaheer is regarded as one of the game's elegant stroke players, and his Test average of 38.84 indicates that if he can play himself in rapidly, he is usually set for a high score.

ALLAN BORDER (Australia): A courageous left-hander with a very correct technique which often belies his ability to play strokes. The Pakistanis will remember his unbeaten 150 and 153 in Lahore in 1980, and Australian fans will recall his resurrection job in the recent Ashes debacle, when, despite a broken finger, he scored 123 not out and 106 not out and 84 in successive Test innings. His eight centuries from 33 Tests have pushed his average to beyond the magical 50 mark to make him the backbone of the Australian middle order batting.

DIRK WELLHAM (Australia): The NSW right hander distinguished himself in 1980-81 by scoring a century in his Sheffield Shield debut and repeating the effort with 103 in his first Test appearance. Wellham has a cool head in a crisis and underlines a sound technique with solid defence and judicious selection of the right ball to attack. His first Test innings of 24 was gritty stuff, and his century in the sixth Test at The Oval left critics wondering why he had not received his chance much earlier. — NEIL JAMESON

"Ah! Finally noticed us, eh?"

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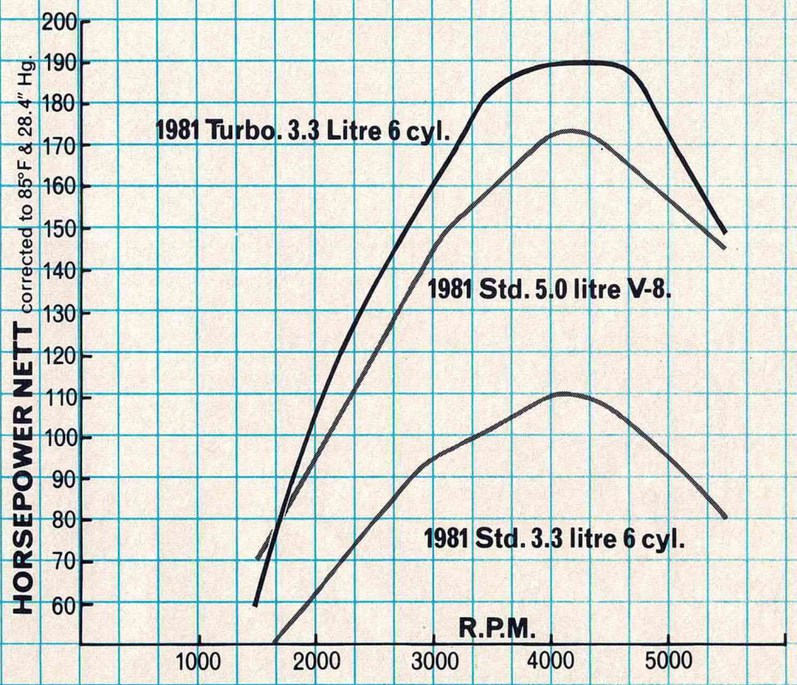

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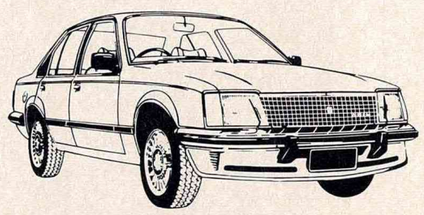

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refers to Marsh and Co as "those Mercenaries", But behind their backs, of course.

Anyway, when Mr Packer and the Board finally shook hands and agreed to agree on the way the game should be played, backs were seen to be scratched. Logically, Greg Chappell was made the Australian captain. It would have been logical, too, to invite Marsh to accept the vice-captaincy, mainly because he's one who knows the game inside out.

One can only assume that it was totally against the spirit of the agreement to have two Packer players in charge of Australian cricket. Marsh missed out, and the job went to the Board boy — young Kim Hughes. Cynics were forced to nod and wink when told that the appointment was simply a smart investment in Australia's cricketing future.

Cricketing futures are a bit like gold futures, and Australian cricket is not far short of bankruptcy following the England tour. Players suffered not only from backbone breakdowns, but there was the South African question — should Dr Christian Barnard be summoned to diagnose matters of the heart? And presiding over this doomsday of sport, the unfortunate Hughes, placed — unfairly, but squarely — on the rack by an Australian Cricket Board and national selection panel that should be cocking collective ears, ready to heed the "sack" call that must surely come.

Poor Hughes, suddenly promoted to handle the most difficult of tours because Chappell was unavailable, by a gaggle of administrators without the courage, the nous or the flexibility to give the job to the right man — Rodney Marsh.

Hughes is the victim of image. In an era when the cricket establishment is desperate to re-establish itself, he has the right sort of image. "The Boy Caesar", he was tagged. Of curly blond hair, angelic face and bright eyes, the all-Australian boy. His flair at those very-important after-dinner engagements had one observer suggesting he would soon be Australia's most popular captain since Hassett.

Blood-rushing stuff for a 26-year-old. Dangerous stuff. What Lindsay Hassett achieved — apart from being one of this country's great batsmen and later broadcasters — the observer didn't mention, but when Australian captains are argued about, Sir Donald Bradman, Richie Benaud and Ian Chappell get the mentions.

Hughes is confident enough to believe he will join them one day. He was quoted as saying after the second Test: "Kim Hughes isn't a good captain, yet." And was silly enough to

add the rider: "But Kim Hughes, Rodney Marsh and Dennis Lillee is a good captain," a pointed reference to rumors that the three had problems getting their eyes into alignment. He even let us know that "if Dennis Lillee wants nine slips, then he'll get nine slips". So just who was running the show? Advice should be accepted, but with flexibility.

So score a minus for captaincy. Hughes even went as far as to admit he had to rely on Marsh's advice to get Bob Willis out in one Test. Willis, on form, can be reliably expected to hole out at deep cover nine times out of 10. It therefore falls into the area Sir Arthur Conan Doyle described as "elementary, my dear Watson".

Hughes should score a 10 for batting, but he still remembers that Centenary Test at Lord's a year and a bit ago. And indeed, it was memorable stuff. Hit a six, he did. Amazing thing was it almost cleared the members' stand on the full. Gin and tonics were spilled. More amazingly, it was struck off a fast bowler.

Hughes remembers: "Chris Old dropped one shorter than I would've liked. I thought — hit it straight with a full-bodied swing. It was like a golf swing on the run. I knew it was six." Exciting. And there is something brazen about that "I knew it was six".

The boy also offers this description of the favorite shot of his career: "I ran down the wicket to Hendrick. The ball was widish, and I turned myself inside out, and I don't know, I sort of square-cut or square-drove it. It went a million miles an hour past Boycott on the boundary, and he never even moved."

Reality was an England tour rather more pedestrian. Out of 10, Hughes probably would be lucky to rate a four. Perhaps it was the pressure of the captaincy that stilled his flashing bat. Then again, maybe he was still besotted with that immaturity which conquers him more often than the talents of the opposing bowlers. Got out leg before a lot, he did. Those judges who know best about cricket's technical matters would put that down to faulty footwork. He played back too much. Oh dear, so fatal on English pitches, where the ball moves. Better to play forward.

It was the great Bradman who once said: "When in doubt, push out." Why should Hughes be in doubt? Well, suddenly, he was confronted with the experts' theory that as captain he must always be seen to be responsible. Lead by example, you know. Silly boy. He believed it, believed that responsibility went hand in batting glove with watchful defence and abandoned his natural game.

There are some players who thrive on pressure. Ian Chappell did, so does Greg, but to a lesser extent. Hughes couldn't. When the Australians embarrassed themselves at Headingly, falling like ninepins, Hughes was so distraught he went for a 20-minute walk. Couldn't bear to watch.

When Graham Yallop reacted with schoolboy petulance to a Bob Willis bumper attack, Hughes actually went out of his way to protect him from the strike by refusing easy runs. It must be pointed out that Yallop was chosen as a recognised batsman, and therefore expected to handle such tactics, if not with aplomb, then certainly with something akin to courage.

Hughes must rue the day a man with a notebook and pen approached with the loaded query: "Do you think you'll stay as Australian captain ahead of Greg Chappell?" It was at the start of the England tour, and Hughes was frank. Yes, he did expect to keep the captaincy if he brought back the Ashes. At the end of the tour, he said what he should have said at the beginning: "It's up to the selectors. I'll be happy if I'm picked in the team." Humble — but safe.

The Australian team is currently playing with the sort of confidence Arnold Palmer has when he putts these days. One of the teams they'll be playing against this summer, the West Indies, are the world champions, fresh from whipping the same England side who whipped us, and the other side, Pakistan, will be no pushover like the weak-kneed Indians were last summer.

The trouble for Australia is the West Indians have this preoccupation with fast bowlers. Same as Bradman used to have with runs. This time, they're bringing six of the buggers; last time (when they crushed us) they needed only five. There is Andy Roberts, who lost a little enthusiasm for the game a few months back, so the selectors allowed him to have a rest, just so he'd be fresh for the Australians.

There is Michael Holding, tall, and lithe, the world's most beautiful bowler, but deadly. Colin Croft has the devil in him. The way he bowls to batsmen reminds one of a schoolboy picking the wings off a fly. Joel Garner is about six and a half feet tall (under the older, sensible scales) and bowls yorkers. That's the ball which if you miss it, breaks your toe.

They're the old boys. New are Malcolm Marshall (smooth), and Sylvester Clarke, who went on the West Indies tour to Pakistan not so long ago and made world headlines when he threw a boundary brick into the razzing crowd and sconned one. It's quite a line-up, just about all of them faster than Botham or Willis, two who knifed our England visitors.

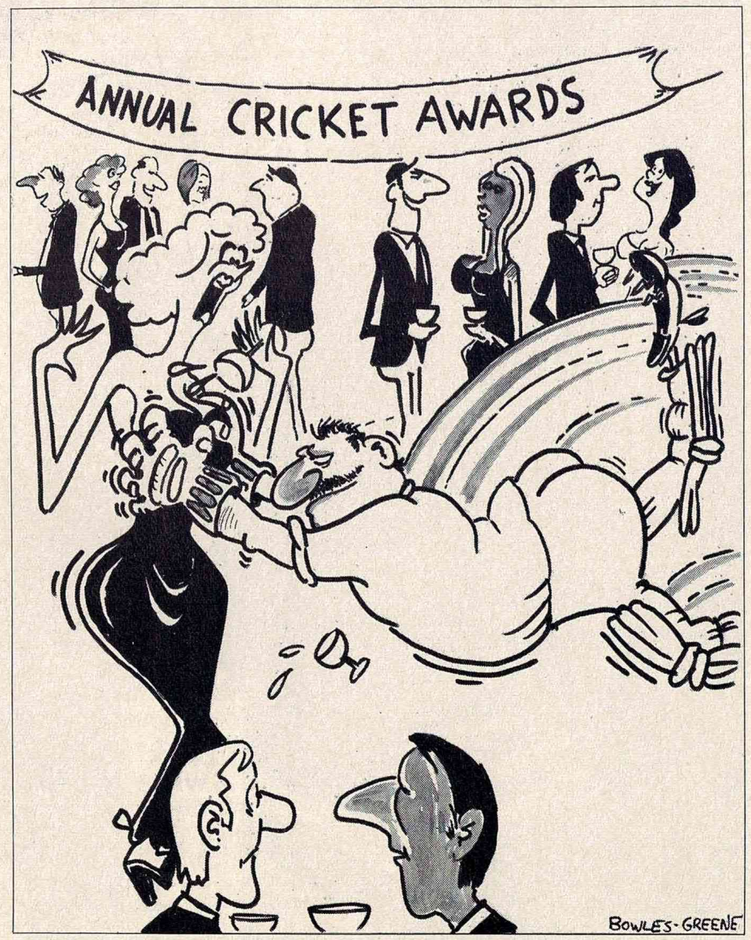
For Australia, the prospect is chilling. We have no reliable opening batting combination. Recently, we have tried Bruce Laird, Graeme Wood, John Dyson and Martin Kent, and all combinations have had the rousing success of a chocolate teapot.

When a batting line-up is confronted by endless pace, I'm not sure it makes much difference whether the test comes early in the day or late. For Yallop, the test may not come at all. His handling of the Willis blitz on this England tour will have been noted by all those West Indians and Pakistanis who make their living from English county cricket.

"Australian cricket may be about to revert to a young man's game. Lillee is getting on. Will Len Pascoe's knees please stand up?"

This is a test, too, for our selectors. It would be predictable if they thought of the England debacle as an aberration, not a nightmare. One would expect them to refer to the successes against India and New Zealand when track records are mentioned. Pseudo success, gentlemen. India and New Zealand are the world's weakest at the game right now (unless we include Sri Lanka, Canada and Zambia).

The selectors might have to gamble. Australian cricket may be about to revert to a young man's game. Lillee is getting on. Will Len Pascoe's knees, the subject of recent operations, please stand up? How much longer can we persevere with Trevor Chappell? After all, we did sack Doug Walters after he'd had what is best termed "a most success-



"Natural reflex, I'm afraid. Anything moves — he catches it."

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ful season", and incurred the wrath of most fans in the process.

Dare we hope for a new Walters? Even another Bradman? Desperation. No, instead we are left with those well-worn cricketing terms "promising" and "tyro", and a bunch of names like Wellham, Ritchie, Phillips, Boon, Shipperd and O'Neill. Every one of them has not long ago thanked their mums and dads for a beaut twenty-first. Can they be ready for this?

. . . Roberts from one end, the ball skidding on, sometimes at full pace, other times slower, once in the block-hole, once at the head; Croft from the other, always into the rib cage, often the throat, relentless. Watch hooking Roberts, because he skids on and you might finish up like Peter Toohey, forehead sliced open. It's survival of the quickest.

The fact is the best batsmen the world over have failed for half a dozen seasons now to quell the West Indian fire. We aren't about to. So score a loss in the Test series and particularly the one-day and night games. Against Pakistan, we're even money.

Our bowlers were the heroes in England. Take a bow, selectors, for choosing Terry Alderman. Those who worship cricket record books like Wisden will tell you Alderman is another Bob Massie, who went to England unknown in 1972 and made his name by taking 16 wickets in the one Test at Lord's. Sadly, he never managed it again, probably because he never went back to England and his swing and seam style was tailored for those conditions.

We may be wise not to hope Alderman can repeat his wonderful England experience on our pitches here. If you do, give him an easier task first — like climbing Mt Everest with his right leg in plaster. In a blizzard. There's Lillee, not quite in the pink anymore, rather the orange if you like his headband. There's young Whitney, raw and exuberant; there's Lawson, sore in the back; there used to be Hogg; there's Ray Bright, who is loosely termed a spinner. Spinners used to be bowlers who tossed the ball up, delicately using the prevailing breeze to vary their length and direction. These days, they have to be able to bat, and when the fast bowlers get tired, they bowl in the manner of a determined dart player.

Come to think of it, our bowling's not so hot, either. Still, don't let me put you off having a wager. A word of advice though: if you ever happen to be walking past your local hardware store and see Rod Marsh, check him out. He knows what the game's all about. Better than anybody.

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The Heart Of The Cross

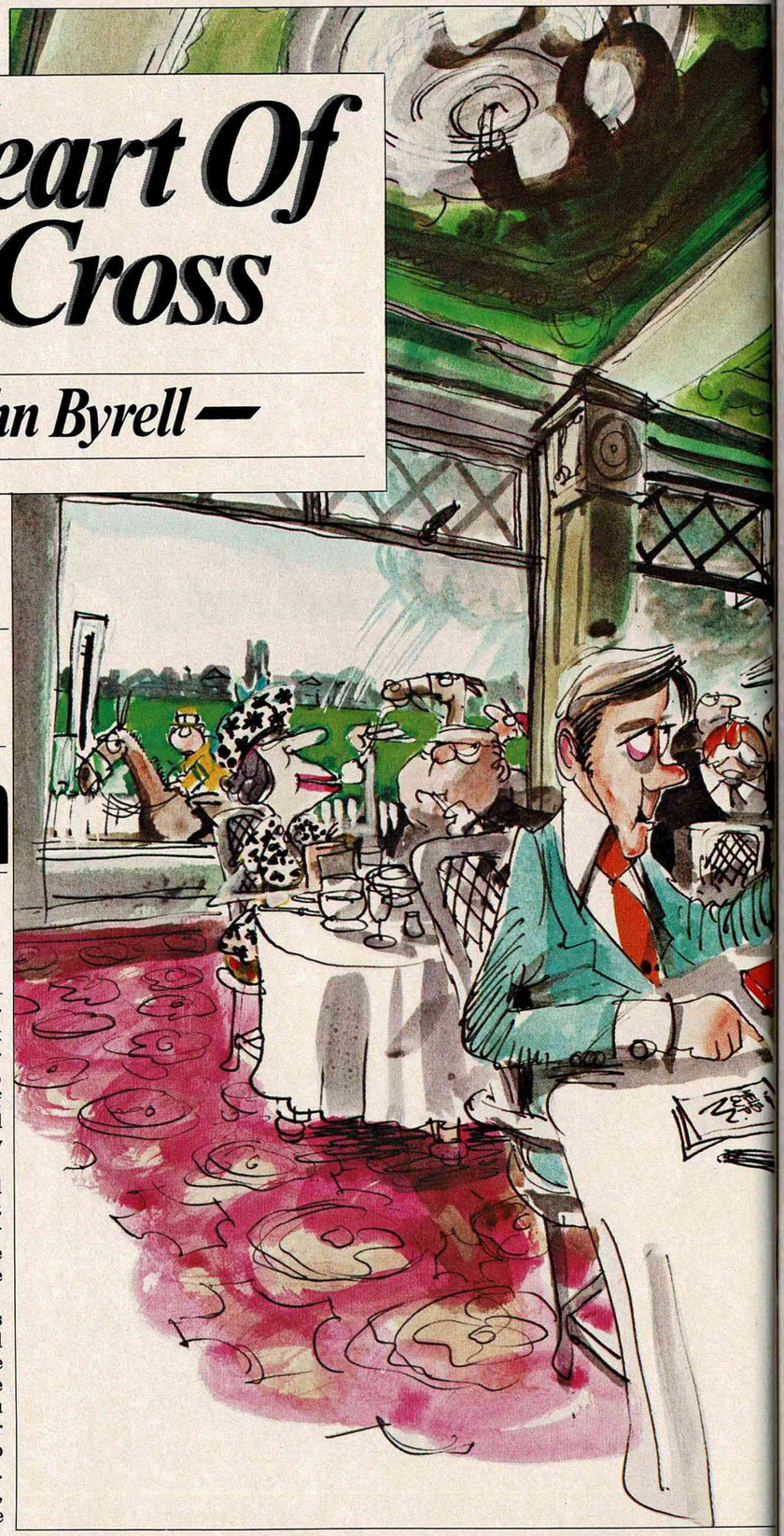
— By John Byrell —

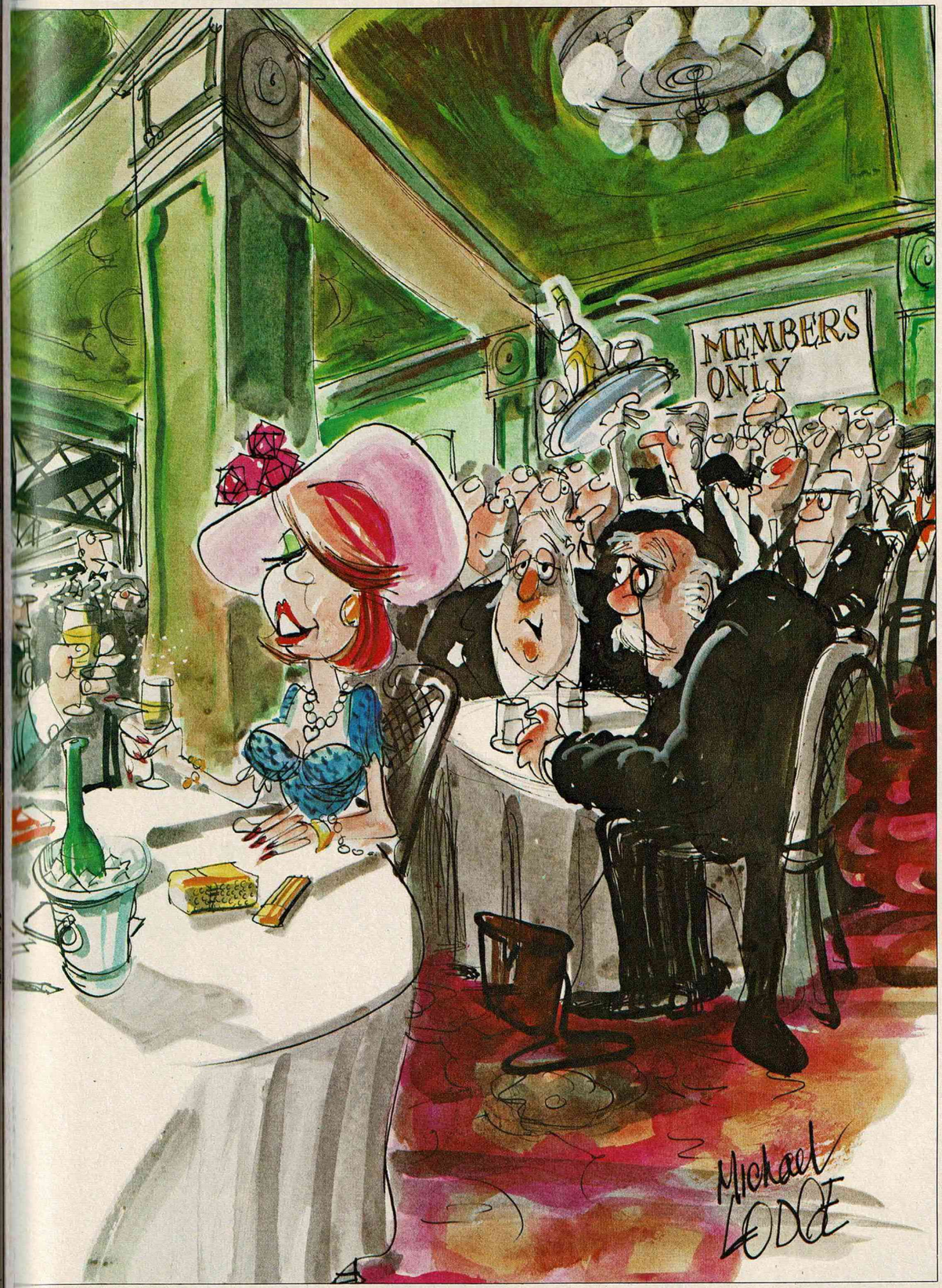
The Cup Runneth Over

THAT particular November Big Oscar wound up with the biggest sly kick he'd ever owned. It'd taken Big Oscar the best part of three months to do it, but now he suddenly found himself with just a thou in what he called his Cup Account. And there was now only a week until Melbourne Cup day.

Come to think, it was most unusual indeed for Big Oscar to have that amount of hard-earned moolah in any kind of kick, let alone this legitimate one he had going for over three months in his local jay arthur rank.

And also, come to think, it was easily the longest run Big Oscar had ever put in on one savings rort. The only other time Big Oscar looked like he was going to make it past the thou mark was just before one particular Christmas when Mick The Muso talked him into investing in a pacer. But that should be a Christmas story, and this one's all about the Melbourne





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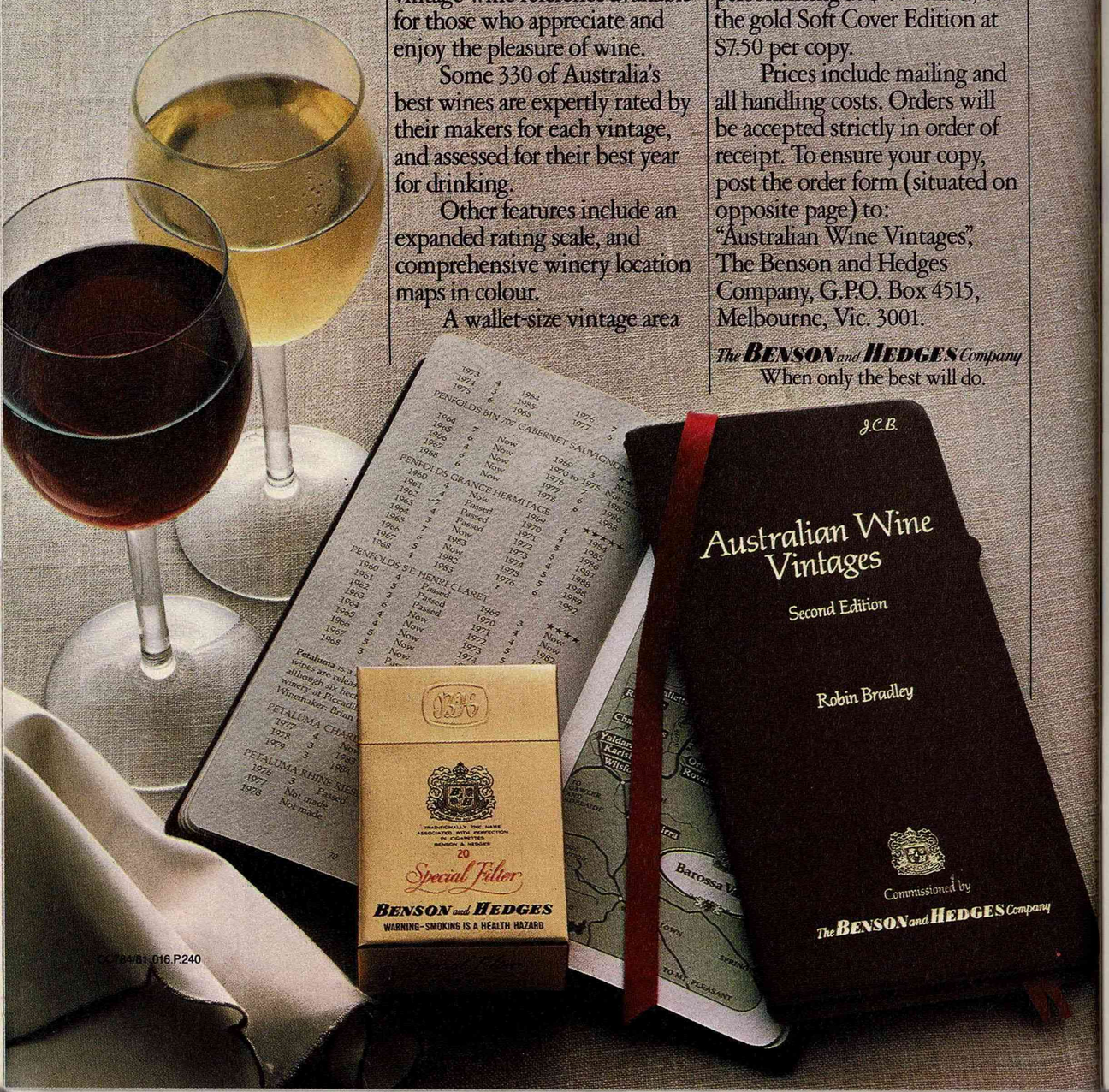

Cup. Big Oscar's Melbourne Cup. And it kicks off the day Big Oscar got called up by his Uncle Angus on the eau de cologne.

It was one night in about the middle of July and Uncle Angus was ringing up all the way from Melbourne which is where Uncle Angus has his pad which is a very big and flash joint at somewhere posh like South Yarra.

Anyway Uncle Angus is just about the only Big Oscar relation who ever seems inclined to even afford Big Oscar the time of day.

Which is just what Uncle Angus did over the eau de before launching into the nitty gritty of just why he was giving Big Oscar a bingle.

"Oscar my boy," said Uncle Angus pleasantly enough. "How would you like to go to the Cup this year?" Now that proposition didn't exactly leave Big Oscar gasping for breath since it is a well-known fact around and about that Big Oscar has been to quite a few Cups. So Big Oscar just said: "Sure would, Uncle Angus. I had that in mind anyway."

"Yes, I know that Oscar, my boy," persisted Uncle Angus. "How would you like to do it in style for once? Look, here is the story. This year I've got to miss the Cup meeting for the first time in years, because I must fly to New Zealand on business. And as you know, I'm a member of the club and I wondered if my favorite relative would care to use my two passes."

That was when Big Oscar found himself a bit short of breath. "Sure, Uncle Angus. Thanks a lot, Uncle Angus," was all Big Oscar could get out before Uncle Angus put the eau de down after telling Big Oscar to expect the members' passes pretty soon in the mail.

So there it was. As plain as a fried egg. Big Oscar was all set to hit the biggest racehorse meeting in the country just like a posho. No worries about getting shoved around in the Paddock with the rest of the mugs or scoring a decent dekko at the big one or even copping a soak when it rained (which it always does).

And so, as soon as the passes arrived which was only a few days later, Big Oscar emptied out his change tin, which was in the lowboy and where he had the habit of tossing all his spare change and the odd note, and strolled into his local jay arthur and opened a Cup Account.

And now here was Big Oscar with over a thou in his sly kick and the Cup going off the Tuesday after next. That was when Big Oscar ran into a snag. And it was of his own making.

See, Big Oscar reckoned he had everything down pat . . . and he pretty well did. He had the moolah and he had his plane ticket and he'd even forked out for a brand new bag of fruit. Then a realisation hit Big Oscar that made him feel smaller than he already was, which is about shoulder high to a corgi.

"I friggin' forgot to ask a friggin' charlie," yelled Big Oscar making the newsstand bloke become very alarmed especially when Big Oscar slammed his newly-purchased PLAYBOY smack on the pavement.

It isn't easy when you measure just under five feet in your bare plates to work up the gristle to front a charlie, let alone hook one.

Big Oscar re-discovered this fact when he hit Sylvia The Swooper about accompanying him to the Cup. First of all Sylvia The Swooper, who is called that on account of she has the habit of doing a brilliant imitation of a chicken hawk diving down on a pullet when she gets blokes alone, and who otherwise works in The Hasty Tasty food emporium (which is sometimes called The Chew 'n' Spew), presented Big Oscar with a wide open and famous north 'n' south.

Then Sylvia The Swooper laughed a belly laugh before telling Big Oscar he never had a hope in Homebush because, one, she hated the races and, two, she hated Melbourne a lot more. At least she had never said she hated Big Oscar.

Taking a line on Sylvia The Swooper's knockback, Big Oscar headed round to the TAB, where he fronted Shirley The Dill, who was known up and down The Cross as the biggest and most desperate mug punter east of Fremantle. Shirley The Dill, unless she was telling whities and she wasn't known to dish up bull, hadn't been known to be on the receiving end of a bet of any sort for probably half a decade.

Big Oscar was spot on in his reasoning that Shirley The Dill would go for a free trip to the Cup. But the plain fact was, she told him with a sad look on her fizz, that she'd just been elected president of the Ladies' Special Melbourne Cup Committee at the Fisho's Club and would have to be there on the day.

After that, Big Oscar pretty well let his donger droop. He plunged his hands deep into the skies of his brand new bag of fruit and headed dejectedly around to The Prince Charles even though it was still very early in the arvo for him to be going there.

That's when The Scholar sprung him about an hour and a half later. Big Oscar wasn't molly or even half snakes because he'd only sunk three lily of lagunas. The Scholar straight away slewed to the fact that his little china was on a down by the way Big

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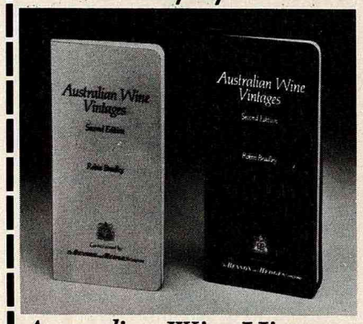

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Oscar just sat there staring into his lily of pigs.

For quite some time, The Scholar never said a dickie bird. Then The Scholar spoke up. "Oscar my dear fellow," said The Scholar. "Would you care to afford me another vodka? And then, if you like, confide in me just what it is that has made you so very morose."

Big Oscar heaved a great big sigh and then ordered another vodka and lily from Lennie The Loser and then let The Scholar in on the whole sad rort. By the time Big Oscar was through outlining his miserable situation to The Scholar, Brucie The Rooster and Mick The Muso had lobbed. But neither The Scholar nor Big Oscar let on about the Cup thing.

Later that night The Scholar found himself in The Purple Panda, which was not the sort of joint you'd expect to spring him since The Scholar has never been what you'd call a devotee of the bare flesh terpsichorean art.

The Scholar requested Heavy Harold, the Purple Panda commissionaire, to acquaint Bouncy Brenda with the fact that he would appreciate a chat with her and then sat down to watch the floorshow, which was number eight on that particular night's 17 floorshow agenda.

In due course, Bouncy Brenda finished her show and put her togs back on and came and sat down with The Scholar. It turned out that Bouncy Brenda couldn't accompany Big Oscar to the Cup for the simple reason that she was working that Tuesday night. She said sorry and The Scholar said that was fair enough and headed off.

The next few arvos in the bar of The Prince Charles rubbity weren't much chop mainly because of the general down mood of the boys. Big Oscar had eventually let on to Brucie The Rooster and Mick The Muso about his plight and the boys had sympathised and even tried to help in some way.

Brucie The Rooster had gone around to Vinegar Veronica the veteran hooker's place in Darlo Road, to find out if she knew of a willing charlie for Big Oscar. But Brucie The Rooster, who was an old china and occasional on-tick customer of Vinegar Veronica's, ended up in the sack playing dead horse with Vinegar Veronica instead.

Mick The Muso fronted a couple of the chorus liners at El Tropicana, which was his current gig, but they both said they had something else on . . . so to speak.

And now it was the Friday before the Cup Tuesday and things for Big Oscar were looking very soldiers indeed. They were all there at The Prince Charles as usual. Brucie The Rooster came out with the desperate suggestion that Big Oscar should put it on one of the horses from The Afro Cuban drag show joint and copped the don't-come-the-raw-prawn treatment, so he fastened his yap.

What happened not so long after Brucie The Rooster made his dingbat suggestion that night will never be forgotten at The Prince Charles, or anywhere else up and down The Cross for that matter.

It started when Lennie The Loser, the barman, told The Scholar he was wanted on the eau de. The Scholar listened for a minute, then put the receiver down and excused himself and headed out the bar dorothys, much to the bewilderment of the rest of the boys.

After what seemed only like half a hair past a freckle, The Scholar walked back into the bar and went up to Big Oscar and asked Big Oscar to please follow him. Then they both headed out.

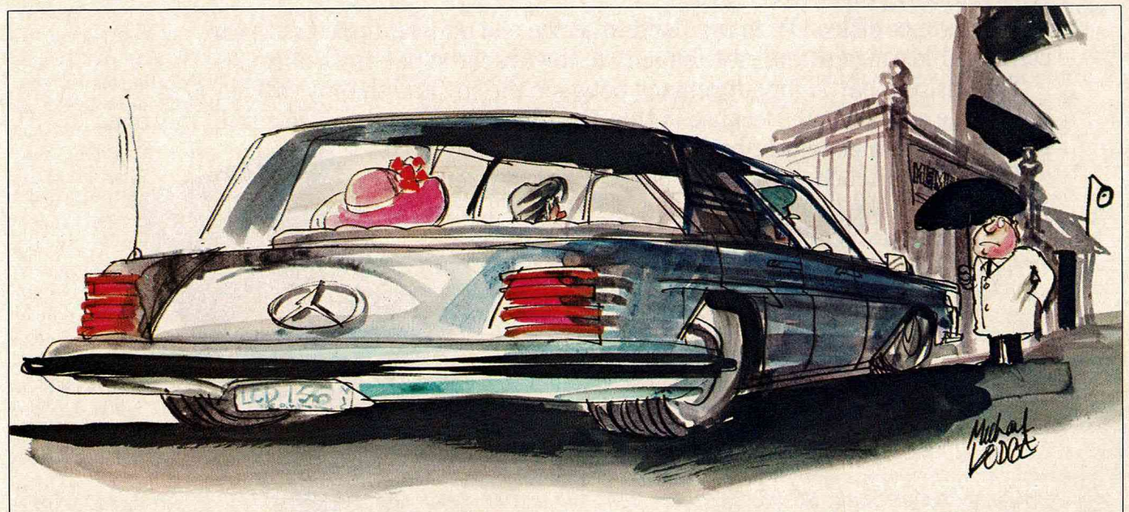
The Scholar led Big Oscar round to the Quim Bar (which is called that because of the fact that quite a few of the leading hookers frequent it) and over to where Bouncy Brenda was propped. That was when Big Oscar came very close to tomming himself there and then. For who was propped there right alongside Bouncy Brenda but none other than Lady Di.

Now it must be clearly understood that this Lady Di is in no way related to the world famous royal charlie who is now Princess Di. About the only thing they have in common is the fact that they are both charlies. This Lady Di was nothing like Charlie's charlie over in The Old Dart.

The plain fact is that, as far as overall form goes, The Cross Lady Di would fair dinkum leave the other one looking like Little Iodine. And one more thing — The Cross Lady Di was known by that monicker long before His Highness even started doing a line for the other charlie.

And there was one simple reason for the Lady tag. Lady Di looks and behaves just like that . . . a lady. Also Lady Di is just about the classiest and best-looking hooker anywhere on this continent. Because of this, she is a very well fancied commodity when it comes to dead horse, and because of that you need a wippy full of 50s to even attract her attention — let alone her favors.

How Lady Di works is this: First of all, after you've checked your kick to make sure you're well enough off, you give her a bingle on the eau de number it has already cost you a score or so to get from one of the commissionaires



Big Oscar even forked out for a Mercedes hire car to take them to Flemington.

or bartenders at one or other of the posh rubbities. Then, if she likes the sound of your voice and what you have to say and if she feels like it and has the time anyway, you've landed Lady Di.

Now, as it so happened, Lady Di turned out to be a good china of Bouncy Brenda on account of Bouncy Brenda has many times pointed well-to-do blokes in Lady Di's direction and because Bouncy Brenda is a very likeable charlie at all times.

So when Big Oscar found himself sitting alongside Lady Di, whose fair dinkum monicker is Diane something-or-other-continental-sounding, he considered himself extremely privileged just to be within a bull's roar of such a classy charlie.

But when Big Oscar all of a sudden heard The Scholar explaining that Lady Di wished to accompany him to the Cup next Tuesday, Big Oscar had to concentrate hard to stop from sliding off his seat.

Not just that either. Then The Scholar explained very subtly to Big Oscar that all the recompense Lady Di would require for the pleasure of her company was the pleasure of Big Oscar's company plus the price of her return airfare and overnight board and lodgings somewhere comfortable.

During the ensuing half hour or so, Big Oscar wasn't positive what he was saying or even where he was. In the end, Bouncy Brenda and Lady Di excused themselves politely and left after Lady Di gave Big Oscar a card and asked him to call her within the next day or so (but not at night) to finalise arrangements.

And so it was all arranged. On the Monday arvo at the airport, the boys and Bouncy Brenda were there to see the happy couple fly off in fair style. When they were walking out to get on the plane Mick The Muso remarked that it looked something like a Sydney silkie leading around one of them Afghan hounds.

On Cup Day, Big Oscar did like The Scholar said and forked out for a Mercedes hire car to take Lady Di and himself to Flemington. (During the time left between the Big Oscar-Lady Di meeting and the Cup meeting, The Scholar had put in a lot of time coaching Big Oscar in how to do the right thing by way of manners and etiquette and other things Big Oscar was a bit light on.)

When they got to the course and started to saunter on through into the members', the bloke on the gate stopped them. He took a dekko at Big Oscar, then at Big Oscar's ticket. Then he took a dekko at Lady Di who gave him her zillion dollar smile and he let them through without a dickie bird.

It was a fairly average Cup day. It was just starting to piss down and was, for November, as cold as a witch's walter. So Big Oscar and Lady Di were glad to make it into the members' dining room. And that's where all the fun started. It was already lunchtime. The Scholar had drummed Big Oscar that it wasn't the done thing for an interstate visitor to the Cup to arrive at Flemington too early. That way, The Scholar had told Big Oscar, they would be able to make the grand entrance.

As it turned out, The Scholar was spot on. As soon as the blokes in the dining room clamped minces on Lady Di, they started dropping cutlery and choking on their smoked salmon. And when the members' charlies and cheeses got a load of Big Oscar, they started doing the same thing for an altogether different reason.

All through lunch, the members' cheeses had to keep on stopping the members from slewing round over their right and left chalks to have a dekko at Lady Di.

After lunch, Big Oscar excused himself and followed The Scholar's lead by leaning down and giving Lady Di a light smoush on the pinkies of her right alexander and took off in the general direction of the nearest betting

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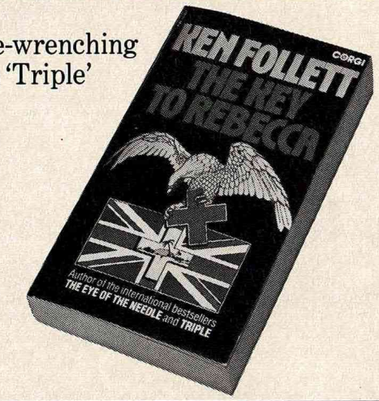

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ring. Once there, the first bloke Big Oscar bumped into was none other than The Flea, who is called that because he hops around all over the country following the neddy form and generally doing his best. Whenever The Flea runs short of on course moolah, he indulges in a bit of coat tugging, which means that The Flea claims the ear of a punter and offers to share his inside oil with the bloke whose coat he has just pulled, for a small outlay. This practice is much frowned on at racecourses all over and The Flea was taking a big chance tugging Big Oscar's coat that Melbourne Cup day.

However, The Flea had found a good mark in Big Oscar, who didn't particularly go on The Flea, but nonetheless had a high opinion of The Flea's overall neddy knowledge. And The Flea was swearing blind that this particular Cup day, Big Oscar could bet his orchestras on the favorite. It was oil straight from the stable The Flea said, and besides, in the wet this thing was a double decker duck.

Now, everyone at all acquainted with the sport of kings knows that the Cup is not the best race to outlay a lot of your ready earned on, simply because the type of neddy which usually takes out the Cup is a dead set two-miler and a pretty ordinary conveyance. But this particular Cup day, Big Oscar was probably carried away by both his recent run of good luck and some good Frog bubbly consumed during lunch. So he took a long dekko at the boards then strolled over and grabbed the odds on offer for the fave, which was four to one.

When Big Oscar lobbed back in the members' dining room, the poshos clustered round Lady Di scattered like a flock of seagulls. Big Oscar didn't take much notice. He resumed his seat and apologised for being absent for longer than expected and waited for Lady Di to polish off her java. Then Big Oscar stood up and, as casually as possible, asked Lady Di if she'd like to watch The Big One, by which he meant the Cup.

Just as Big Oscar and Lady Di got down to the stand, it started to really piss down. It was so heavy you could hardly make out the neddies' colors as they ploughed up to their khybers through the mud and slush. However, when they got to the post, Big Oscar was able to make out that the fave wasn't even in sight. It finished like a hobbled camel at the arse end of the field. A thing with a name that sounded like either a liqueur or a Dutchman romped in at any old odds.

Big Oscar did a good job at covering his grief. "Will we," said Big Oscar being as gallant as he could, "go to the bar for another glass of bub . . . umm . . . champagne?" And that's what they did.

When they got to the members' bar, Big Oscar just stood there at the bar with his fists shoved deep in his skies and his shoulders hunched. For a few beats, Big Oscar didn't say a dickie bird and didn't even give Lady Di a glance.

All of a sudden Big Oscar reached over and lobbed a tenner on the bar, saying: "Well, little flower, it looks like we'll have to drink the local stuff this time on account of that's my last razoo. I fell for the old coat tug trick. Imagine that at my time of life. It's just as well that I paid the hotel bill in advance."

Then Big Oscar blurted out the whole rort to Lady Di . . . about being accosted by The Flea and about being told the favorite was a certainty and about having fronted the bookie and claiming the fours on show about the fave and about outlaying all that was

"Big Oscar squinted up at the barman. 'Let's have it in one of those fairy glasses then. But I won't have a straw.' "

left of his Cup kick (not counting the brick on the bar) on the rotten animal.

"And," added Big Oscar ruefully, "I have to own up that I slung The Flea two 20s for the lousy oil he fed me. I'm the worst mug in the world."

With that Big Oscar fastened his yap, took a deep breath and waited for Lady Di to open up on him about being the worst mug in the world and even worse maybe.

But Lady Di didn't do that. She didn't even say tsk-tsk. She just stood there for a beat, with no particular expression on her gorgeous fizz, looking straight into Big Oscar's minces.

Then she said: "Excuse me, Oscar." And then she did an about-turn and headed at a fair clip out the members' bar dorothys. So that was how it was, Big Oscar thought to himself. And serves me right, too. Here I am with the flashest charlie at Flemington on Cup Day and I go and blow it by being an idiot and a ratbag.

After that effective enough piece of mental flagellation, Big Oscar picked up his last brick and waved it at the barman. "Might as well get half plastered anyway," Big Oscar said to himself. Then he said to the barman: "Let's have a schooner, willya mate?"

The barman looked down at Big Oscar the way Melbourne barmen do whenever they happen to catch an unwary coat hanger in their territory. "I take it sir," said the barman with a fair slice of lemon, "that you are a citizen of Sydney?"

"Spot on, me old," Big Oscar replied with a nod.

"Well then, sir," continued the barman with a little more lemon this time, "I feel I must inform you that we do not serve those unwieldy measures of beer in this State."

"Okay, china," said Big Oscar squinting up at the barman. "Let's have it in one of those fairy glasses then. But I won't have a straw if it's all right with you."

For a minute there it looked like Big Oscar would cop it all over his loaf. "Certainly, sir," said the barman doing a fair job of keeping his shirt on. "Our size of glass should suit you right down to the ground."

With that, the barman started pouring the seven-ounce pigs and Big Oscar performed his own version of breasting the bar, which means that his elbow was just about on line with his shoulder. Then he leaned a bit closer to the barman.

"All jokes aside, me old," said Big Oscar with a lot less aggro in his tone. "Fair dinkum, I really do have a lot of time for Melbourne citizens when it comes down to it.

"Yeah," said Big Oscar picking up the seven-ouncer. "When it comes down to it, it's a dead-set fact that Victorians do have a lot in common with Australians."

It's hard to say just what may've taken place there and then if Lady Di hadn't suddenly showed up. Big Oscar nearly dropped his seven.

"Oscar," said Lady Di sweetly. "I'm so sorry I took so long, but there was quite a big queue and I had to find the right bookmaker." Big Oscar just stood there with his mouth agape.

Lady Di went on to tell him her story, which goes like this: It seems that as soon as Big Oscar took his leave in the dining room to go and take a dekko at the Cup odds, the members whose cheeses were out powdering their hooters, or whatever, started moving in on Lady Di like barbecue blowies.

They all started talking at once asking her this and that and would she like a drink and what were her plans afterwards and things like that. Lady Di was as nice as pie to each and every member because it wasn't in her nature to be impolite or a rudie.

Anyway, at last one of them, a fat bloke in a grey top titfer, decided to outdo the others by offering to place a

A thing with a name that sounded like either a liqueur or a Dutchman romped in at any old odds...

bet for Lady Di with his bookie just as a friendly gesture to a visiting charlie. Lady Di, again not wishing to appear ungracious, accepted the man's offer sweetly. So the fat member waddled off and came back very soon with a betting ticket, which he handed over to Lady Di before making it back to his table to try to square things with his cheese, who'd just lobbed back from the charlies' brassco.

"He asked me," Lady Di told Big Oscar, "what I wanted to back, and I told him that since my parents are Dutch, I would like to back . . . umm . . . Van Der . . . er . . . Van Der Hum, wasn't it?"

"Betcha sweet walters it was," said Big Oscar so loudly that he snared the attention of the rest of the patrons in the members' bar. "Shit . . . excuse my Tasmanian . . . that's the thing that just swam home with the Cup. It musta been 15s or 20s. How much did the old turd . . . sorry, gentleman . . . plonk on for you?"

"Well," said Lady Di looking thoughtful. "My arithmetic was never too good, but it must have been about a hundred dollars. Yes, I think that's about right. Now Oscar, would it offend you if I purchased a bottle of Pol Roget for us?"

"Eh?" replied Big Oscar who was still pretty much in shock.

"It's a very nice French vintage champagne," explained Lady Di. "I wonder if they've got it in stock?"

"Most certainly," said the barman giving Big Oscar the what-a-dill-you-are look. "And what vintage would you prefer madam? We have either the '71 or the '67."

"Seventy-one, thank you," said Lady Di nicely. "It was a better year I believe. And, bartender, I wonder if you would like to join us in a glass?"

"Yeah," said Big Oscar with a wink and a grin at the barman. "Why not? Do join us, sir."

By the time Big Oscar and Lady Di got back to The Balmoral rubbity, they weren't feeling much pain. Big Oscar paid the hire car driver out of the new wippy Lady Di had insisted on providing for him and they took the lift up to their floor, where Big Oscar said goodnight and thanks again and started to head off for his room.

"Oscar," Lady Di called out when he'd only gone a step or two. "Won't you join me in a nightcap?"

Big Oscar stopped in his tracks like a stunned mullet and did an about turn that would've made Rudolf Nureyev green.

"Besides," said Lady Di. "I want to show you something." Big Oscar gave that remark a ton of thought as Lady Di unlocked her dorothy. Once inside Lady Di rang up for some more marjorie main and then went over to the betty grable and picked up her handbag and tipped the contents out. Mixed in with that lot was what looked like about a dozen assorted business cards.

"Oscar," said Lady Di giving him a little smoush on his left hide 'n' seek.

"You're a darling. Thank you for bringing me to the Melbourne Cup — you see, because of these business cards, which were given to me while you were out placing your bet, I intend spending what should result in a very . . . er . . . rewarding return visit to Melbourne in the near future."

"Strike me Di," said Big Oscar just as the waiter lobbed with the bucket of marjorie. "I'm tickled for yer. By the way, I won't be long paying back the moolah you slipped me."

"Oh no," said Lady Di as the waiter was leaving with a big quizzical frown on his fizz. "There's no need for that. Don't you see Oscar? You've done me a favor."

"But . . ." was all Big Oscar could come out with before Lady Di plucked the aristotle of marjorie out of its ice and handed it to him to open.

"And Oscar," continued Lady Di with her minces alight like an old fashioned loungeroom fire. "There's a lot of thunder about tonight. And I'm very frightened of thunder."

The boys wanted to know the whole rort, and that particular Wednesday arvo in the bar of The Prince Charles rubbity, Big Oscar obliged.

He told them about The Flea and the barman and the members and the weather and the champagne and Lady Di's win.

"What a pity you didn't get on the winner instead of losing the lot," remarked Brucie The Rooster. "Ha ha ha ha ha. If you had, you might've been able to afford some dead horse with Lady Di."

Big Oscar took a long pull of his lily of Resch's. He couldn't help letting go with a small grin.

"Yeah," said Oscar. "What a pity."

"Well, I'll be damned! I think it's the ball I lost this morning!"

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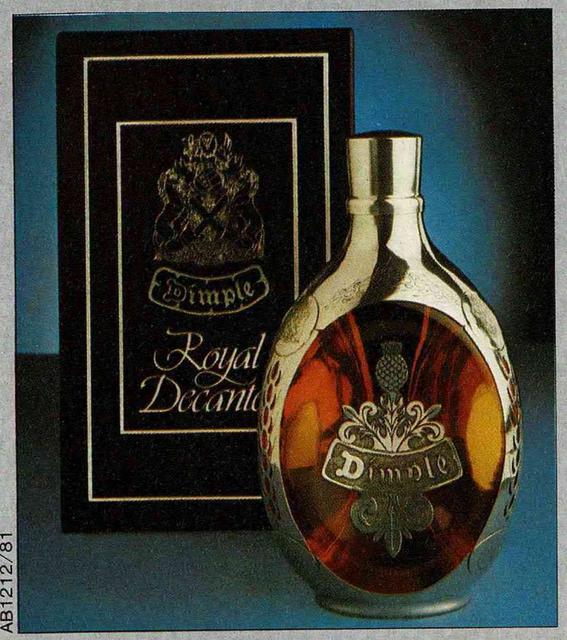

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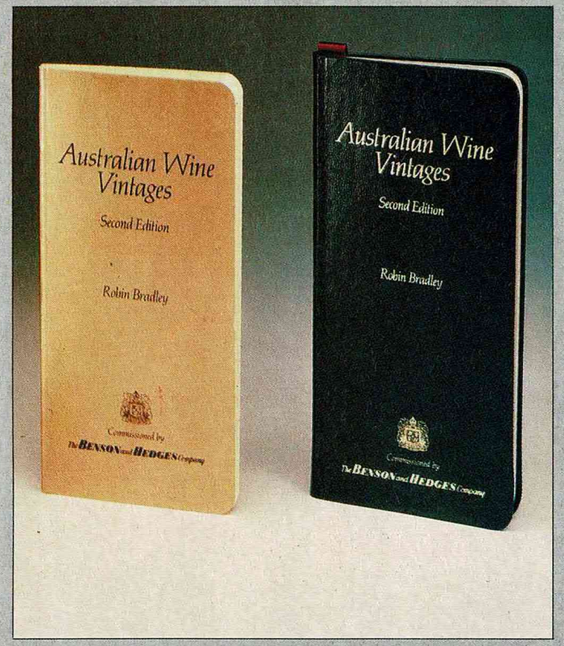

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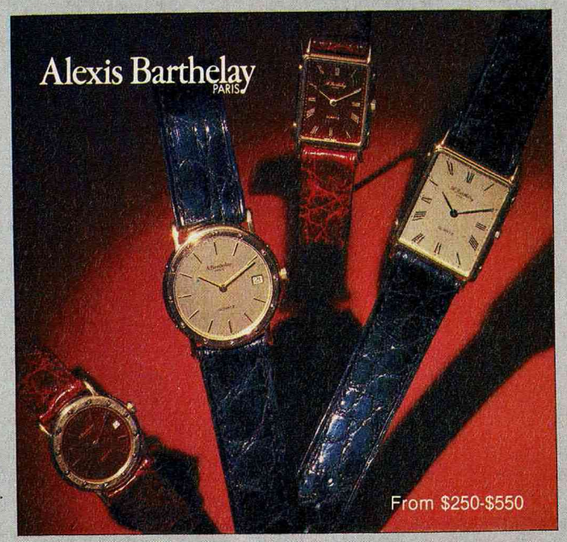

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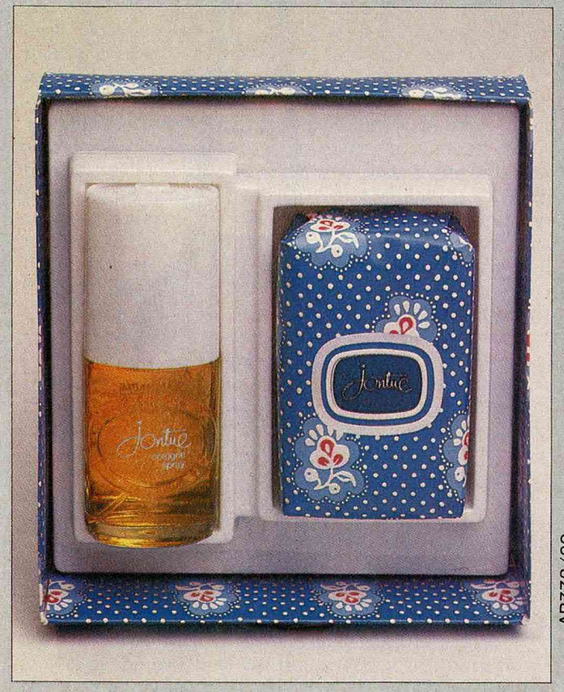

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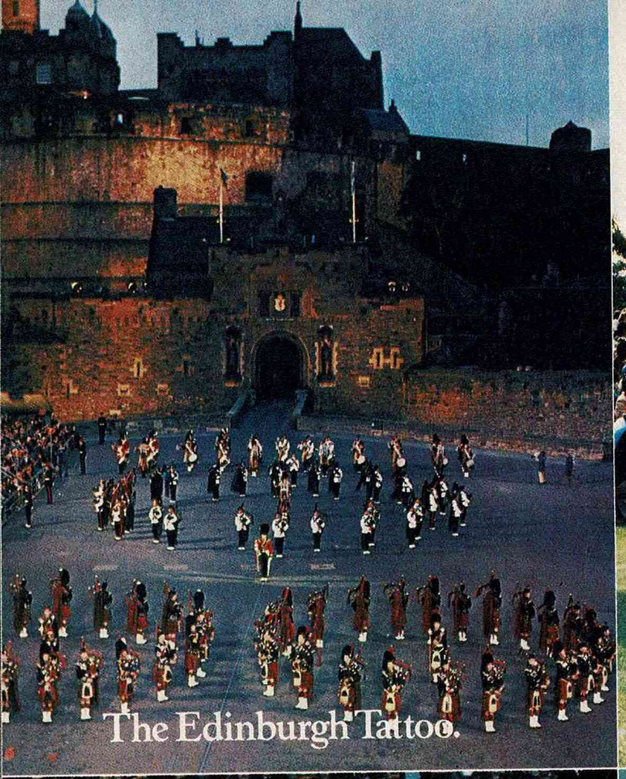

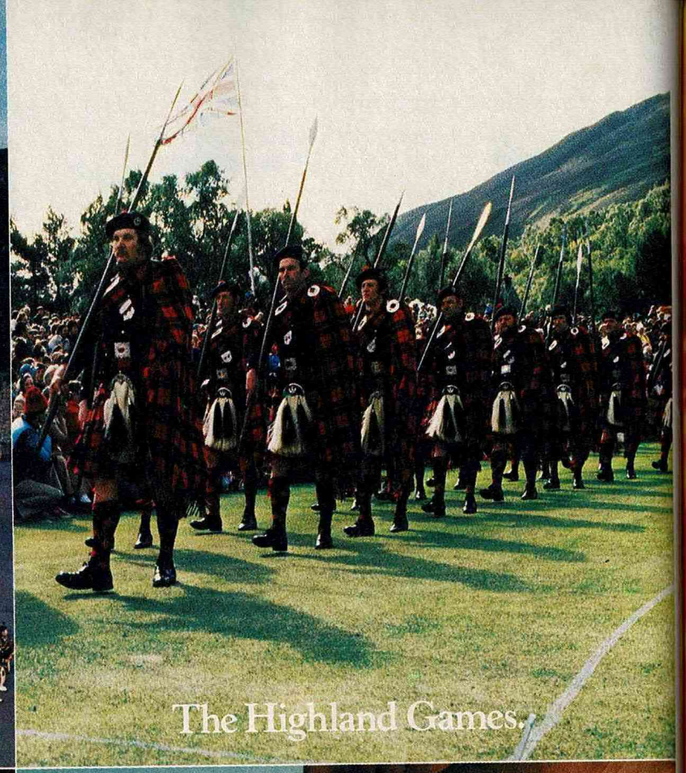

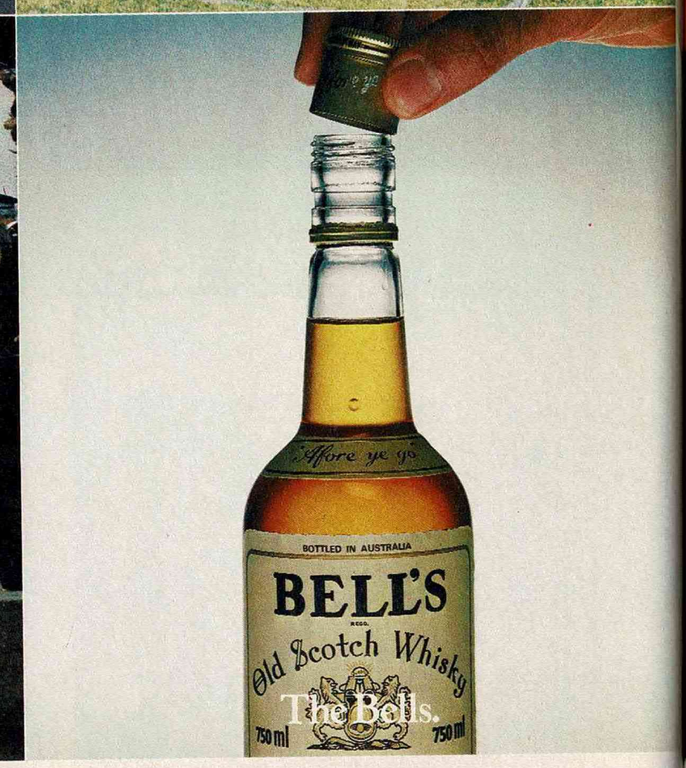

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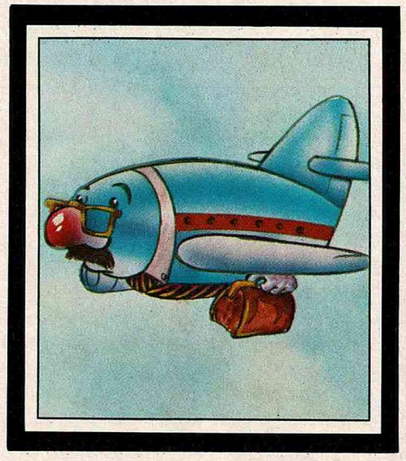
THE JUNKET: FLY TOO FAST AND YOU'LL PAY LATER



Playboy's Pipeline

AT THE TOP of the list of all the things worth regretting about that executive promotion stands the quick inter-city business trip.

The "privilege" of travelling interstate once a month to fly the company flag loses its appeal when the young exec finds it can be the longest, hardest day of any working month and not the birds and booze junket his superiors paint it to be.

If your company's attitude is typical of most, the inter-city trip could consist of a grand errand done on a regular basis to take care of an assortment of tasks which have accumulated since your last visit. The problem is that, for cost reasons, the firm wants them all tidied up within the context of one working day. It might mean you leave home before dawn, fly a round trip of almost 2000 km, work like crazy, and make it home well after dark. You'll agree it's no picnic, so in the interests of the rookie inter-city businessman, we offer the following well-considered advice:

The basis for getting the most out of your inter-city working day starts with planning all arrivals, departures, accommodations and appointments well in advance. You'll find this will allow you to maximise time, make the right flight connections and permit you to maintain as much composure as possible. There's nothing worse than arriving late for an important appointment ill-prepared and flustered because you were let down by a badly planned flight schedule.

It is wise to leave a copy of your itinerary (including relevant phone numbers) with your secretary or assistant should it be necessary to contact you during the visit. Depending on the proximity of home or office to airport, the decision to cab-it or take your own car and leave it in an often expensive airport parking station is something worth considering.

For airline tickets: most large companies operate an account system with either TAA or Ansett, which means you can book by phone and pick up your tickets at the airport (or have them sent to your office). Transport at the other end is best by cab, or, if you know the area well enough, rent-a-car. To avoid delays, it's wise to book ahead for car rentals. The large rental firms operate their own credit card facilities which help holders avoid delays.

Weigh the merits of car rental versus cab in terms of the greater mobility of self-drive as opposed to the no-parking hassles of taxis. Choose a rental car-style in keeping with the importance of your mission, your status and that of those you have to see.

If you want to arrive fresh, leave booze off your in-flight refreshment list. The pressurised atmosphere of a jet aircraft does weird things to the human body such as causing dehydration. Alcohol only compounds the problem. You're much better off sipping fruit juice or water.

Your assignment might be more time-consuming than planned, necessitating an overnight stay. To avoid hassles, it is often advisable to make a tentative booking before you leave home base. If requiring an hotel either as a temporary office or to stay, it is wise to be *au fait* with local accommodation standards. You wouldn't want to entertain a valuable client in a flea pit. If space in your briefcase permits, always pack a clean business shirt. Food spills, sweat and biro stains occur at the most unfortunate times, so it is best to be prepared. A razor, toothbrush, deodorant and breath freshener rarely go astray. Never leave on a trip without your contact book.

You're rarely going to get out of town without doing the business lunch haul. It might expose you to a bit of devastating hometown hospitality which could prove quite disastrous, especially if you've got some uncompleted afternoon chores. For this reason, get as much done as you can in the morning, and, if necessary, make the luncheon date as late as possible. Alcohol will again appear high on the list (unless it's purely a working lunch) and you'll have to do a bit of smart side-stepping to keep your mind clear for the rest of the assignment.

By keeping an eye on the time, you'll be aware of just how much you'll be able to complete and still leave enough time to make it to the airport. Always account for rush-hour traffic and it's a good idea to check the time taken for the airport to city run so that you'll know how long to leave for the return trip.

There are a few golden rules to apply and they definitely fall into the category of commonsense. For instance, never travel during school holiday period, Christmas or Easter vacation, Melbourne Cup week or in times of industrial unrest in the air industry. If you do, it might take much longer than anticipated. Always bear in mind that you are working outside your normal environment and therefore it pays to be even more on your toes than usual. If your company is a bit tight with the expenses, keep a tight track on what you spend (let the hosts buy that extra bottle of champers).

Then again, if it all goes hopelessly contrary to plan, take the expenses and have a great time on the town. It will probably cost you your job, but think of the benefits — no more junkets. — NEIL JAMESON

Your next Restaurant Outing

The restaurant

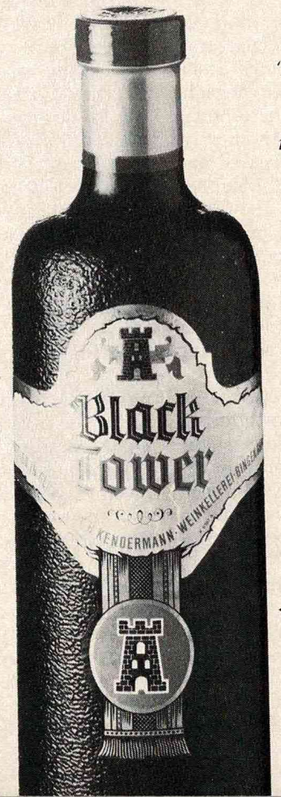
We can't all be wine-and-food writers and know the restaurant scene like the backs of our forks; or have a cosy little Italian place around the corner where we're on middle-name terms with the chef. So if you don't eat out all that often, don't be afraid to take note of what the food-writers say. And listen to friends. At least you can get the feel of what the restaurant's like, what its specials are and what you can expect to pay. A little research like that and you can talk as knowledgeably as anyone about the town's best eating-places.

The outing

There is only one rule: do it soon. In Australia, we don't take nearly enough advantage of our ever-improving supply of restaurants. It doesn't have to be a special occasion. Do it on a whim. Explore the ethnic possibilities. That way you can often eat spectacularly and still stay low on the price scale. For instance a good Chinese meal doesn't have to cost much at all. Add a bottle of good white wine like Black Tower and you're doing yourself very grandly indeed. Above all be adventurous: Chinese isn't all chop-suey and Italian isn't all Spaghetti Bolognese. One last thing: if you think it's not good enough, tell them so. Nicely. That's the only way we can help fix it.

The wine: to bring or not to bring

Restaurants fall into two categories: they either have wine-lists or they're B.Y.O. Finding Black Tower on a wine-list is not only reassuring; it's helpful. When a number of different people order a number of different dishes, it's helpful to have a white wine this good and this versatile. Tell the waiter you want Black Tower and you're off to a good start. If you're bringing your own, Black Tower makes even more sense. It's a good imported wine that doesn't force you to plan your menu around it.



The setting

Dinner Service is from Opus Paddington: called 'Black Magic'. Cutlery by Butler, from Jane Makay Imports. Salt and pepper shakers by Arzberg. "Connoisseurs Collection" glassware, handmade in Poland. Vase is a vodka glass by Holme Gaard. Flowers are Candy Tuff and Nareen from the Loyal Florist in Paddington. All on a white damask cloth. The Bentwood chair was imported especially for Hanna's Restaurant. Georgian grey shutters and leadlight door came from the Glenmore Road Antique Co.

The Black Tower

The wine is Black Tower Liebfraumilch, a fresh, fruity white from Germany. It should be served chilled. Black Tower isn't all that expensive and is absolutely perfect to serve right through your next restaurant outing.

Black Tower Liebfraumilch
White wine from Germany
Distributed by the House of Seppelt.

D692 AB845/80

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF DICK PULLER

SATIRE BY HARRISON

THERE'S NO BIZ LIKE SHOW BIZ.... ESPECIALLY SINCE SYDNEY FOLLOWED UP THE AMAZING SUCCESS OF ETHNIC TV...WITH AUSTRALIA'S FIRST... EROTIC TELEVISION STATION!

THIS DRAMATIC GRAPH SHOWS THE SPOT WHERE SEX AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY MET... AND BROUGHT INTO BEING... CHANNEL SEX!

SEX

MORALS

TECHNOLOGY

BOOM!

JOIN US NOW FOR ANOTHER IN-DEPTH SURVEY OF AUSTRALIAN LIFESTYLE AS WE TAKE A SNEAK PREVIEW OF THIS LATEST SOCIAL BREAKTHROUGH!

...EVER FEEL THERE ARE TIMES WHEN THE THIN LINE BETWEEN REAL LIFE AND THE ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE IN THE SUNDAY PAPER BECOMES INCREASINGLY BLURRED?

...WHEN THE ONLY THINGS IN THE MEDIA ACCURATE ENOUGH TO SWEAR BY ARE THE RACING RESULTS AND THE TV GUIDE!

ASTI SUPPLIANT

LET'S KICK OFF IN STUDIO 'A' WHERE THEY'RE LIMBERING UP FOR ANOTHER DAY'S PRODUCTION IN THE STATION WHERE RATINGS GO UP AS FAST AS PANTS... COME DOWN!!!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE ALL WONDERING WHAT A SCENE THAT LOOKS LIKE IT'S FROM 'CALIGULA', IS DOING IN A MAGAZINE LIKE PLAYBOY?

CHANNEL SEX

OKAY, EVERYBODY... CLOTHES OFF!!! ..WE'RE ABOUT TO BEGIN TRANSMISSION!

THERE'S SOMEONE FROM PADDINGTON ON THE PHONE... HE'S GOT VD AND WANTS TO KNOW IF WE'LL BROADCAST HIS NAME AND ADDRESS AS A... COMMUNITY SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT?

DON'T WORRY! SHE'S JUST AN OLD 'SALE OF THE CENTURY' CONTESTANT... SHE KEEPS OFFERING HERSELF TO EVERYONE FOR FIVE DOLLARS!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE COMPLAINING ABOUT. I'VE SEEN MORE SEX & VIOLENCE IN THE STAFF CANTEEN HERE THAN HAS EVER GONE TO AIR!

THERE'S ONLY ONE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS STUDIO... AND TIMES SQUARE... THIS STUDIO'S GOT MORE PERVERTS!

STRUTH! LOLA, IT'LL BE HARDER FOR YOU TO STAY IN YOUR PANTS THAN WRIGGLE OUT OF THIS CONTRACT!

SWITCHBOARD

I THINK IT MUST BE A COMPLAINT CALL... I CAN'T HEAR ANY HEAVY BREATHING!

CHAMPAGNE! OYSTERS! CAVIAR!

JUST PUT ME DOWN IN THE CREDITS AS... "DIRECTORS ASSISTANT"

NO...WE DON'T HIRE NIDA GRADUATES... WE JUST HIRE THE PEOPLE WHO GO TO THEIR PARTIES!

DIRECTOR

MOMMIE DEAREST

HOW ABOUT A CONTRIBUTION FOR OUR DIONNE WARWICK DENTAL FUND'? NONE OF THE GUYS WILL WORK WITH HER TILL SHE GETS A SMALLER SET OF TEETH!

© AUG 81 T HARRISON

MEANWHILE, BACKSTAGE THE STATION THAT SOAKS UP THE... SEXUALLY UNEMPLOYED IS ALSO TRAINING THEM FOR FUTURE SEXCESS!!!

...DISCIPLINE... LONG HOURS... LOW PAY AND TOTAL COMMITMENT!

ARE YOU REFERRING TO MY PAST SEX LIFE... OR MY FUTURE ACTING CAREER?

THAT'S THE STATION MANAGER! AND HE'S REFERRING TO YOUR PAST ACTING CAREER AND YOUR FUTURE SEX LIFE!

BETWEEN YOUR BOOBS AND MY ERECTION WE'D HAVE A PERFECT WALK-ON COMEDY TEAM AND A STAND-UP COMEDIAN!

WE HAVE SO MANY LATE NIGHTS HERE WE END UP USING PREPARATION H TO SHRINK THE BAGS UNDER OUR EYES!

THEY SAY A LITTLE BIT OF PUBLIC EXPOSURE NEVER HURT ANYONE'S CAREER!

THIS MAY LOOK LIKE ROMPER ROOM BUT ACTUALLY IT'S A GUERRILLA TRAINING COURSE WHERE WE LEARN HOW TO DEAL WITH STUDIO AUDIENCES!

...IT'S ALSO THE FIRST PRE-SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN IN AUSTRALIA TO GO FOR A 3 O'CLOCK LICENCE!

HOPELESS B. BARE

MISS DIMPLE

I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT IF THIS SHOW IS COEDUCATIONAL OR JUST PLAIN, OLD BISEXUAL!

THEN IT'S ON INTO THE DAYS FIRST QUIZ SHOW... THOSE SHOWPLACES FOR THE IGNORANT & THE UNINFORMED AS THEY TREAD THROUGH A PURGATORY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE...

THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ROOM IN HERE TO RUB SHOULDERS TOGETHER!

...ER.. I THINK WE HAVE TO RUB OTHER THINGS TOGETHER ON THIS TYPE OF SHOW!

WE DON'T THINK OF IT SO MUCH AS A LIVE AUDIENCE THAN AS A CHEAP ALTERNATIVE TO EUTHENASIA!

CHANNEL SEX

HELLO AUSTRALIA!! WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SEX... ...AND THANK YOU, ONCE AGAIN FOR ALLOWING PEOPLE LIKE US INTO YOUR HOMES...

DATE WITH DESTINY

THERE'RE SOME PEOPLE OUTSIDE CALLING THEMSELVES THE TIBALDI SALAMI SISTERS ...THEY WANNA KNOW IF WE CAN USE THEIR ACT

YOU DON'T REALISE HOW HARD IT IS FINDING QUIZ QUESTIONS THAT EVERYONE AT HOME KNOWS THE ANSWER TO... ...BUT AT THE SAME TIME REALLY BAFFLE THE STUDIO CONTESTANTS!

TRY & KEEP THE CROWD BACK... HE MIGHT TURN DANGEROUS AS WELL AS DIRTY?

...SINCE WORKING HERE I'M THINKING OF IT LESS AS A SEX LIFE... AND MORE OF A REPERTOIRE!

THE ONLY REASON THEY HIRED ME WAS THAT I HAD... BETTE DAVIS THIGHS!

...AND HERE HE IS FOLKS... TONIGHT'S ADJUDICATING SOCIOLOGIST... DICKIE BOY, PULLER!

IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK ON... 'DATE WITH DESTINY' THE SHOW WHERE THE LOSERS GET EGG ON THEIR FACES.. AND THE WINNERS GET A CLOSE SUBSTITUTE!!

YOU ALL REMEMBER LOLA, LAST WEEK'S BIG WINNER ON...

"THE MORAL OR THE MONEY" YOU'LL REMEMBER HOW SHE SUCCESSFULLY DITCHED A HUSBAND OF TEN YEARS AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN AND WENT ON TO WIN A MEMBER OF THE STUDIO AUDIENCE... PLUS A HIGH-RISE, HIDEAWAY, LOVE-NEST UNIT ON GLAMOROUS POINT PIPER!

WELL.. SHE'S BACK TO DEFEND IT ALL... SO WITHOUT ANY FURTHER ADO I'D LIKE YOU ALL TO TEST YOUR BUZZERS...

LOLA

BOOM

OH WELL... I'LL LET THE STATION MEDICAL TEAM SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR MAIN COMPETITOR WHILE YOU AND ME SLIP STRAIGHT INTO THE QUESTIONS..

OKAY, LOLA, FOR ONE MILLION DOLLARS!.. WHAT IS IT IN THE AIR IN SYDNEY THAT STOPS WOMEN GETTING PREGNANT?

MEN'S LEGS!!!

YEAH! THERE GOES ANOTHER BIG WINNER & SHE'LL BE BACK AGAIN NEXT WEEK TO RISK EVERYTHING! ...LIVE-IN LOVER... HOME UNIT... COURT ACCESS TO HER CHILDREN... DIGNITY... SELF RESPECT...

THE LOT!

MOVING RIGHT ALONG WE'VE GOT TONIGHT'S BLOTTO DRAW... THE LITTLE BATTLERS BIG WEEKLY CHANCE TO GAMBLE...

..AND GET HIS BALLS RIGHT AT THE SAME TIME

...AND TO KEEP AN EYE ON TONIGHT'S DRAW WE HAVE THREE FACELESS ARAB BUSINESSMEN IN THE STUDIO WITH US..

BLOTTO

THEN A FEW TASTELESS WORDS FROM OUR SPONSOR

I'M SORRY..! BUT IF YOU WANT TO DO COSMETICS COMMERCIALS HERE YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO CREAM MORE THAN JUST YOUR HANDS... 12 TIMES A DAY?

..AND TOMORROW'S WEATHER FOR YOU GIRLS! IF YOU SEE ANY 'HIGH FRONTS' APPROACHING YOUR... 'LOW PRESSURE' AREAS... WATCH OUT! THERE'LL BE A FEW... ISOLATED WET SPOTS!

...WE EVEN HAVE A QUIZ SHOW FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T COPE WITH THE HIGH PRESSURE SEXUALITY OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY, IT'S CALLED... "CERTIFIED"... AND IT'S BROADCAST LIVE FROM THE GROUNDS OF A POPULAR, INNER-CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTRE!

IT'S THE QUIZ WHERE THE WINNER GETS A DISCHARGE FROM THE SHOW... AND THE LOSERS HAVE TO GO ON TO ANOTHER ROUND OF QUESTIONS!

INSTEAD OF PUTTING US IN A SOUND PROOF BOOTH THEY JUST LOCK US IN THE WARD 5 SHOWER BLOCK!

OKAY... LAST QUESTION.. "HOW MANY FLEW OVER THE CUCKOOS NEST?"

THIS IS THE ONLY QUIZ SHOW WHERE THE CONTESTANTS ASK THE HOST IF HE'S COMING BACK NEXT WEEK!

FAR TOO OFTEN THAT HUMAN WASTELAND OF BURNT-OUT LIBIDOS & JADED SEXUAL APPETITES PRODUCE HEADLINES LIKE THIS!

...AND SO... CHANNEL SEX BEGAN OPERATING ITS OWN SOCIAL BACK-UP SERVICES...

SUBURBAN HORROR SHOCK! TV HOLDS FAMILY TO RANSOM... IT WILL LET THEIR BODIES GO... IF IT CAN KEEP THEIR MINDS!

YEAH, WE'RE THE ONLY TV STATION THAT MAKES... HOUSE CALLS!

..WE'RE HERE TO SEE ABOUT A MALFUNCTIONING VIEWER...

IT ALL BEGINS WHEN THEY ADJUST THEIR SETS MORE OFTEN THAN THEY ADJUST THEIR THINKING!

ADVANCED CIRRHOSIS OF THE MIND!

UNABLE TO CRACK A HORIZONTAL HOLD LET ALONE A VERTICAL HOLD!

THIS WOMAN TRIED TO TRAIN HER TV TO GO TO THE KITCHEN AND MAKE THE SNACKS WHILE THE ADS WERE ON!

PARANOIDS!

SOMETIMES I REALLY WONDER IF WE'RE WATCHING IT... OR IT'S WATCHING US!

..OR THIS UNFORTUNATE PERSON WHO BECAME CARRIED AWAY WITH OUR 'DIAL-AN-OBSCENITY' HOME VIEWER PHONE-IN!

UNTIL ULTIMATELY THEY FALL PREY TO "VIEW-OUT".. TERMINAL VIEWER SYNDROME!

TELEVISED MID-AFTERNOON ADULTERY CAUSED THIS HOUSEWIFE'S IDENTITY CRISIS..

...AN OVERLY MIXED MEDIA THAT FINALLY GOT TO HER

CLINICALLY ALIVE... BUT NO BRAIN ACTIVITY REGISTERING

ANYWAY! LET'S NOT UPSET OURSELVES OVER THOSE POOR SOULS WHO CAN'T BALANCE THEMSELVES ON THAT THIN LINE BETWEEN SEX & ENTERTAINMENT ...AND LET'S GET BACK TO THE FUN PEOPLE WHO CAN!

YES IT'S THE HIGH SPOT OF THE WEEK'S VIEWING... "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE FROM THE CROSS"... WHERE THE CAMERAS FOLLOW SOCIETY AS IT TREADS ITS WAY ALONG THE OVEREXPLORED FRONTIERS OF PROMISCUITY...

IT MAY LOOK LIKE LAST TANGO IN PARIS'... BUT ACTUALLY IT'S... 'MIXED COMBO IN SYDNEY'

THIS GUY PICKED ME UP BY TELLING ME HE WAS HALF ARAB... ..AS USUAL... IT TURNED OUT TO BE THE BOTTOM HALF!

EVER SINCE CHANNEL SEX BEGAN BROADCASTING I'VE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO SURVIVE BY OFFERING A SEX PLUS HAMBURGER ALL INCLUSIVE DEAL FOR FIVE BUCKS!

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH SEEING A STRANGER ACROSS A CROWDED ROOM THESE DAYS... BY THE TIME THEY MAKE THEIR WAY OVER TO YOU... YOU'RE ALREADY SICK OF THEM!

CHANNEL SEX

HERE WE ARE TRYING TO SELL SEX, THEN YOU COME ALONG AND GIVE IT AWAY! WHAT KINDA CRAZY MURDOCH STYLE STUNT ARE YOU TRYIN' TO PULL?

IF THESE SHOPS SOLD ACNE CREAM INSTEAD OF SEX AIDS THEY'D DOUBLE THEIR PROFITS!

YEAH! WE'RE LUCKY MOST OF THESE PEOPLE CAN'T AFFORD TO COME OUT EVERY NIGHT

YOU KNOW THEY'RE PROBABLY FIGHTING OVER ONE OF US!

WHAD YA MEAN.. STOP 'EM? GIVE 'EM A SHOT OF GLUCOSE TO KEEP THEIR ENERGY UP!

IF I'D KNOWN THE LIGHTS WERE GONNA BE SO BRIGHT TONIGHT I'D HAVE WORN MY THEATRICAL MAKEUP!

HAPPY NEW YEAR! AUSTRALIA... AND AS WE SAY GOODBYE TO THE YEAR OF THE DISABLED, REMEMBER, IT'S NOT THE SIZE OF YOUR CRUTCH THAT COUNTS... IT'S WHAT YOU DO WITH IT!

THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN TELL THE TIME AROUND HERE IS BY COUNTING THE RINGS UNDER PEOPLES' EYES!

I BET ALL YOU CYNICAL BASTARDS OUT THERE ARE THINKING THAT THERE'S NO ROOM IN THIS BRAVE NEW WORLD OF SEX...! FOR LOVE!

DICK... WE CAN'T GO ON MEETING LIKE THIS... SHARING OUR MOST INTIMATE MOMENTS WITH AN ESTIMATED VIEWING AUDIENCE OF 14 MILLION!

YOU'RE RIGHT, LOLA, LET'S SLIP INTO THIS DARK, EMPTY ROOM FOR A FEW PRECIOUS MOMENTS AWAY FROM ALL THE CHEAP, TINSELLY GLAMOR!

GRUNT GROAN MOAN

DICK... I THINK... I THINK IT'S... TRUE... LOVE...

ER... LOLA... I THINK... I THINK I'M... ER... E.R...

LIGHTS! CAMERAS! ACTION!

THAT'S INCREDIBLE!!!

NOT SO LOUD YOU FOOLS! WE DON'T WANT TO SCARE THEM OFF!

STRUTH! THAT WAS A CLOSE SHAVE... FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT I WAS APPEARING ON 'THIS IS YOUR LIFE'!

AW SHIT! LET'S FACE IT, DICK, BEVERLY HILLS IS JUST A STATE OF MIND ANYHOW!

JOIN DICK FULLER AND THE EROTIC TV CROWD NEXT MONTH WHEN CHANNEL SEX MAKES A DISASTROUS ATTEMPT AT GOING 'LEGIT'!

When your game's as good as our shoe, we'll see you both at Wimbledon.

Teddy Tinling's latest tennis chic. Plump British strawberries and clotted Devon cream.

And the cream of the world's tennis shoes.

Some of the great traditions of Wimbledon.

Dunlop is about to start another. With the new all leather Grand Slam.

This is not just another tennis shoe. This is the tennis shoe.

Why Leather?

Aside from the sheer luxury and comfort of leather, there are two reasons why so many professionals and coaches prefer a leather tennis shoe.

Firstly, a leather upper doesn't 'wear out' so much as 'wear in.' After a couple of games, it's moulded itself to the shape of your foot.

Secondly, nothing really breathes like leather. And the Grand Slam is punched at the toe for extra ventilation.

And that upper is glued and stitched with heavy gauge nylon thread to a remarkable sole.

The Sole.

Dunlop have developed a brand new rubber compound for the sole of the Grand Slam: a rubber so tough it's amazed our designers.

Tough enough to take it on the rim, where tennis shoes really take a hiding.

And highly flexible for greater grip on the contact area in the centre sole.

Professional Endorsement.

The Grand Slam, like all the tennis shoes in the Dunlop range, carries the endorsement of the Tennis Professionals Association of Australia, as well as the approval of the L.T.A.A.

The brand new Dunlop leather Grand Slam.

At around $40, it probably costs more than the tennis shoe you're wearing now.

And so it should.

DUNLOP

Leo Burnett 4.3174

No matter what star sign you are, when the moon's full in Sagittarius on the 11th of December (allowing a few days either side), you're going to do a lot of things you probably shouldn't do, and you'll suffer the consequences. But no matter, do them anyway and blame the full moon afterwards. Set yourself up for a full-flight indulgence in sex, wine, neurosis and hurriedly concocted alibis. Particularly affected will be Gemini, Sagittarius, Virgo and Pisces. They'll be doing a slow-burn of intense moonrays and the greatest tonic which will wind them down and level them out is a massive dose of Vitamin S.

Everyone will well and truly sober up and get back to business on the Capricorn new moon around Saturday 26th December. This heralds the time to start organising all the serious stuff. Money and possessions will take precedence over more frivolous aspects. It's all just part of the cosmic scheme, and it will leave you horny as hell and ready for more sexual adventures.

Mr Aries

You'll be soaring to new heights, especially where sex/love/work all overlap. Be careful you don't put yourself on a dangerous collision course at the same time. Relationships on every possible level are highlighted by next month's stars. The personal pressure will be so intense you'll feel like you're balanced on a razor's edge. Cruise into the confident Aries fastlane and nothing negative will catch up with you. Sexually you will be "hot to trot" (what's new?), and could find yourself wandering through sexual pastures that offer decidedly greener pickings than the ones that you've meandered through in past months.

Ms Aries

You'll be delighted when you discover that this month Ms Aries is most approachable and very open to any extra-curricular activities (especially where they involve one-to-one close encounters). Naturally she also will expect the usual seduction games to be played. Before you actually pounce, be prepared to butter her up.

Mr Taurus

Don't expect a sex siren to come a' knocking at your front door, craving love and seeking sensual shelter in your arms and bed this month. No matter how hot, smouldering and heavy the night, or whether your passion is racing and raging out of control, you're going to have to go out and make it happen. Doubtless this will come as somewhat of a shock to your inflated sexual ego. With the way the stars stack up at the moment for Taureans, you're about to pay your sexual dues and there's not much you can do about it. Where you have a definite delicious woman in mind for bounded endless pleasure (yours!), it might be a good idea to save her up.

Ms Taurus

Sexually she'll be more turned on where she can portray the predator rather than the prey. Don't pounce before she's had ample time to make her own moves. Ms Taurus is operating under the heading of a "sexually liberated woman" this month . . . why don't you show her exactly how far she can go? It could change her life.

Mr Gemini

The claim that Gemini is the "Peter Pan" of the zodiac didn't just evolve by accident. This month you'll discover what an enterprising Gemini can do with this kind of reputation. That innocent "schoolboy charm" which is so easy for you to turn on and off is about to shoot some of your hormones sky-high. If you've had an inkling to explore the heady sexual dimensions of an affair with an older woman, could be you're just about to unleash some very Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde sides to your sexual character. The way you can work out whether your sexual desires are going to overwhelm you in this direction is: In your childhood how did you get along with your kindergarten teacher and/or the older girls at school? Did you shake at the knees, do anything and everything to attract their attention? If so, you're right in the line of target for some interesting sexual planetary influences.

Ms Gemini

Around the full moon on the 11th December, Ms Gemini is likely to transform from her usual wild and willing self into an almost out-of-control nymphomaniac. Of course, there may need to be some special stimulus provided to unleash this side to her character. That's where you can come up with some carefully contrived erotic suggestions, just to set the proper mood.

Mr Cancer

Put up lots of mistletoe, cross your fingers and make a big Christmas wish. If you're waiting for something soft and sweet to be placed, hot and ready, in your Christmas stocking, start working on it now. Where your vision comes gift-wrapped, with all moving and working parts, the wise Cancer will get smart early in the month and begin to lay a sneaky trail. Your social life is about to undergo "the big boom", so when you're aiming for some nooky side by side with

your Christmas pud, don't leave fate to chance. Next month will provide some tempting and tantalising opportunities, but only for the clever Cancer who organises his sex life like a full-on military campaign.

Ms Cancer

She will have a hidden craving to be taken by the hand and led down a few seaside tracks where the hot sun will make her head spin and she can listen to the waves as they make their own kind of cosmic love to the shoreline. But, don't leave her in the sun too long. She's too delicate, and fulfilling her fantasies could be too exhausting (for her . . . not you!). The summer-moon is the thing that brings out her sexual side, so make love to her by moonlight as much as possible.

Mr Leo

Where you're into dressing up and doing the whole kinky Leo number, right down to high-heeled stilettos and black suspenders, . . . next month looks like being "Leo" showtime . . . so if you're going to be put in the sexual spotlight, you may as well turn on one hell of a performance (blowing a few outrageous fantasies at the same time). Finding the "right" partner isn't going to be easy. There will be several more than willing sexual partners, but the serendipity experience you've been holding back for isn't likely to come into your life. You've got to wait until well after the New Year. Poor you — so much to give, and no one special to give it to! This month will find you taking a lot of cold showers!

Ms Leo

In the month ahead, Ms Leo intends to be quite a heartbreaker. Sexually she's out to score and won't miss any chance to flirt. She'll even go after her friend's boyfriends or husbands. By the end of the month, she could have created quite a stir and be most unpopular with the women around her, but very, very popular with the men.

Mr Virgo

You'll be Mr Honeybee this month and won't need to go on a restless sexual flight. You're going to be snug as a love-bug on a rug. It's a shame it will be too hot to light up the open fireplace to complete the picture. You're "in love". Totally faithful, devoted and devastated. Of course, under duress you could fly the coup and do the Saturday night single's shuffle, but that wouldn't make you happy. The best thing to do is to mellow out and enjoy it. The more you try to fight cupid's arrow, the tighter the lovetrap will grab. Just enjoy yourself. If you head for the hills, you could find yourself feeling lower than the basic wage in a month's time.

Ms Virgo

Underneath the superficial veneer of being caught in the hustle and bustle of other people's lives, Ms Virgo is really very caught up in some rather involved sexual schemes. She's got a seduction plan she's about to swing into action this month. Someone she has fancied from afar is soon to discover all their Christmases are about to come at once!

Mr Libra

Your head will be swimming with romance commitments ("do you love me?", "do you love me not?") this month. What a rip-and-tear, top-of-the-line month awaits your eager person! Swept away by the passion of your involvement, your day-to-day routine will be interspersed with hour-to-hour doubts and delights about plans for your future. You'll be in constant confusion, but then your doubts are always the mirror of your own insecurity. Should you run away from romantic situations, you are really running away from a lot more than that. Think things over carefully. Then whatever you decide to do, do the exact opposite. That way everything is certain to work out perfectly. A helter-skelter of a month ahead.

Ms Libra

Business before pleasure for Ms Libra over this month; however, once she gets around to "pleasure", she's going to be intent on making up for lost time. She's coming to a conclusion about her lovelife, so where the sex isn't taking her "over the top", she could be ready to look around for something a lot more spicy.

Mr Scorpio

Through December, abundance aplenty surrounds Mr Scorpio. In fact, too much high-living and hot-loving could take quite a toll on your energy level, so be prepared to rest up between pleasure bouts and not go at any one thing too hard and/or fast. You won't be able to wander too far afield and could find yourself restricted by being tied down to somebody's emotional apron-strings. However, being territorial by nature, your usual philandering ways will have to be put on the shelf until things get back to normal once more. December is the ideal time for you to put on your think-cap and start planning the sexual strategies for the coming year. You'll need to be first off the starting block to finish up with whatever means first prize to you. It's the Scorpio's month to start scheming and plotting.

Ms Scorpio

Ms Scorpio is about to go all out over the month ahead and be looking for the most exotic and foreign ways to bring sexual thrills into her life. She isn't going to be prepared to sit at home, waiting for love or sex to find its way to her door. She's quite capable of going on a dedicated manhunt, leaving no sleazy sideline unexplored.

Mr Sagittarius

Travel is written in the stars for you in the month ahead. If you aren't planning on going anywhere, expect visitors from far afield to become involved in your lifestyle. Sexually, you could find yourself enjoying a little unplanned involvement around the full moon on the 11th of December. If your birthday is close to the 11th, expect a dramatic changeabout during the year ahead. You are going to need to be fleet of foot to cover the unusual terrain, especially where involved in a full-on sporting life. If your kind of sporting life revolves around the games two can play, don't forget to pull down the blind. There could be someone around who has a lot more than a casual interest in what you are up to — take all necessary precautions that they won't.

Ms Sagittarius

Too many options confront Ms Sagittarius in the month ahead, causing all-round confusion. Good advice is what she's looking for. At the moment her life could be a lttle too dramatic for her to really relax into the slipstream of sensual lovemaking. However, if you get turned on by a sexual tornado, she could be your girl.

Mr Capricorn

After the first week this December, Venus leaves your sign. Consequently you could find some benefits this planet has provided zooming off in its wake. This doesn't need to apply, especially where you have put work into your relationships in the past few months. However, where you've been shallow, selfish and unattentive to a partner, you are likely to find yourself double-timed or even jilted at the altar. This can happen where you haven't paid your dues and come up with the romantic goodies right on cue. It's karma time for Capricorns, and you are about to find out whether you have been good, great or mediocre to others. Where you've not been nice at all, be prepared for a "raspberry" of a month.

Ms Capricorn

She'll be winding down psychologically in the month ahead, and with her leisure time will come an upward swing in her sexual needs. She'll still be planning ways to make more money, so where you are trying to impress, give her a few pointers on how she can pull in more money and you'll be more amply rewarded.

Mr Aquarius

If you've been mistreated or scorned by someone you love, hang on to your crystal ball. You could be about to discover the wonderful feeling of the shoe being on the other foot (or better still the glass slipper fitting another Cinderella). I'm not wanting to raise your hopes with the possibility of cruising into a longterm relationship, but there is a fine odds-on chance of turning up some very nice and very naughty diversions to keep your mind off anything that has wounded you. Around the time of the new moon on the 26th of December, keep your emotional defences up — it is, of course, Boxing Day, and that is exactly what it'll be.

Ms Aquarius

She'll be ready to try anything new to escape from the humdrum routine she's been facing of late. Think of something bizarre, and slightly demented, and she'll liven up instantly. She's looking for mental and physical stimulation, so be prepared for some crazy sexual situations.

Mr Pisces

Next month, you're in the sun, in love with stars in your eyes. But, with your true Pisces split-personality, you still feel like slipping away from your usual swimming hole to the open slather of the hot throb of city nightlife. Your imaginary sexual plans are bigger by far than your chances of fulfilment. Besides, the message of this month is the things you love, know, have tried and tested will all add up to a lot more satisfaction than the beckoning temptation to tart it up out on the town. Stay home, behave yourself and enjoy what you have.

Ms Pisces

Where Ms Pisces is unattached, she's tired with being one of a number in some man's sexual harem. She's confronting a crossroad and you should be prepared to offer her all your time.

ARE OUR
35 GOLD MEDALS, 21 SILVER MEDALS, 31 BRONZE MEDALS,
TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING?

During the last six years St. Agnes has won just about every important brandy award in Australia. In fact St. Agnes Very Old Brandy last year won the double gold medal, against all comers at the prestigious Bristol Wine Show.
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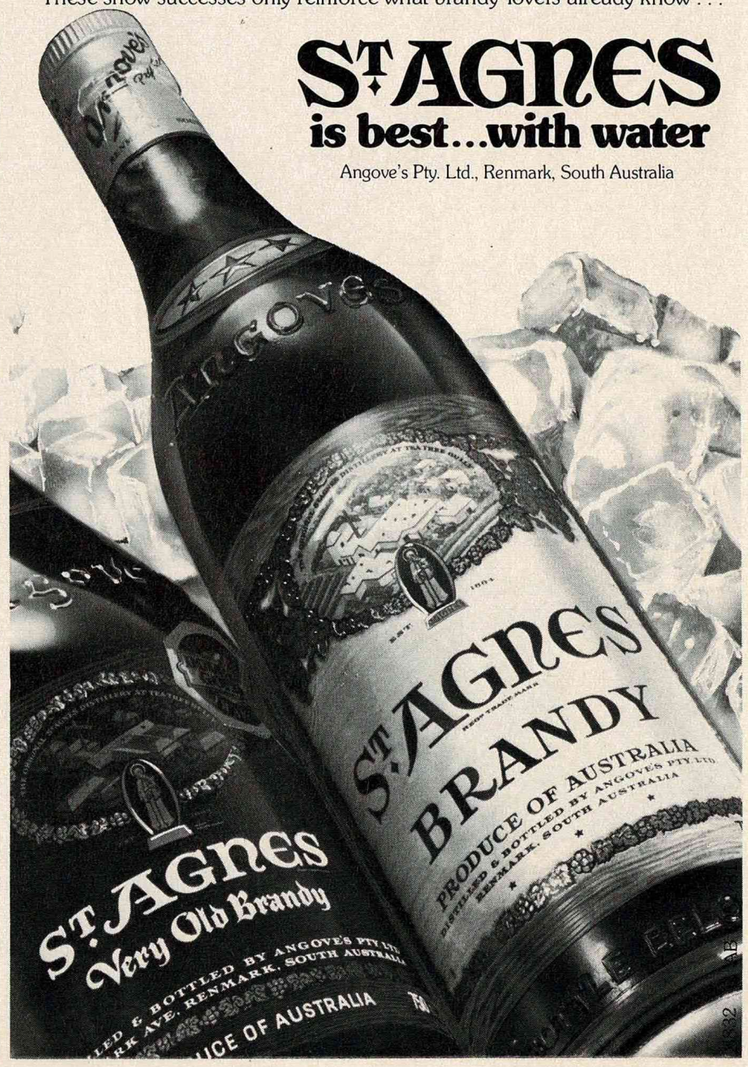


RATHER BRAVA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL FORSYTH

In the new automotive equation, "big bore" means the mass-produced motor car, a kind of mechanical strait-jacket. Fiat's SuperBrava offers an escape clause . . .

MOST MODERN sedans are just an automotive "fix". They take the pain out of motoring, but then you don't feel anything, either. They have all the individuality of a photocopy — auto-clones, all of them mass-stamped out of a medial mould.

Their inevitable lines evoke no emotive response. Tidy little two-box tin cans wedged at the nose, tailgated at the rear, with all the interior charisma of a padded cell. And almost similar silence levels. A few seconds inside and your brain turns to jelly. Some dinky little gadgets are provided to slow the process: switches to flick, knobs to pull, levers to lever. You can even manufacture your own climate: press-button cool or some-like-it-hot. Mobile Muzak is a finger-touch away.

You are sealed-off from your senses; no feel, no sound, no smell. They ride like hydrofoils, remote from surface contact, and even the exhaust never raises its voice. If you can burn rubber, you can't sniff it. They all steer and stop and go the same way — like dodgems. One day, they'll sell extra-ride tickets at traffic-lights and in two blocks, nobody will notice any more even when the go-fast pedal goes dead. Just get another ticket to boredom . . .

There are alternative automobiles. The Fiat SuperBrava is one — an automotive anti-clone. It is defiantly dated in its styling, something like a shoebox piggy-backing a housebrick, with all the apparent aerodynamics of a block of flats. It has no tradesmen's entrance at the rear, just a big square box of a boot (remember those?). The reciprocator up front is planted at the opposite end to the drive wheels, so all the transmission hardware is accommodated between. The wheels dangle from struts at the front and a beam at the back, and the tiller is tethered direct to a rack.

But it works. You feel it right away,

Motoring by Rob Luck

for you're not shoe-horned into the cockpit, wearing the cabin like a glove. You can see out all round, even the corners of your own car — front and rear. When you press on the go-pedal, the thing grunts. And goes. Stab the stoppers, and it will stand you up straight. Point it at a corner and it reacts. You can actually *feel* it.

It's not an accident. Italians build cars that way. Just drive through Milan or Rome or Naples and you'll see why. Italian cars are either nose-up, nostrils flaring, or nose-down, scraping the tarmac. In the curves, everybody is auditioning for the World Cup rally, and the *autostrada* is like the *Lanciato Kilometri,* with every driver engaged in his own world record attempt.

Somehow, Fiat has built a car that sates the enthusiast's appetite while accommodating the motoring mundanities of roominess, reliability and fuel efficiency. It has the numbers on its side (over 1.5 million cars sold worldwide) and the biggest selling car in economy-wracked Italy — even though 70 percent of production is exported. Australians are now imitating the trend — gobbling up nine months' supply in less than five, swelling the Fiat dealers' books with advance orders.

They are being seduced by one of the best-aimed and most cost-efficient packages in the automotive business. Auswide, which distributes Fiat, has done its homework well. The basic 131/Mirafiori envelope is stacked with up-market specifications — standard-everything from laminated screen/tinted glass to QH lights and tacho. Only "air" ($1195), sound ($325 factory), sportswheels (4/5 x $95) and metallic paint ($250) are extra. And go-faster stripes are another $75.

The total tag is $10,995 (manual) and $11,695 (lazy), and built-in are some pretty heavy semi-comp specs as well, bits from the 131 Racing — the most potent European variant of the marque, which runs to shocks, springs, rollbar, clutch and engine tune. This is a genuine 100 (DIN) bhp, good enough to get you down the standing quarter in 17 seconds or better.

And this from four cylinders. Not four ordinary cylinders, of course. The two-litre mill has been prised straight out from under the hood of the 131 Racing. And it runs refinements that buyers of Oz and Nippon prods can still only dream about — twin-overhead camshaft alloy head, electronic ignition, two-stage, two-barrel downdraft Weber, five-bearing mainshaft, and anciliary refinements like an electrically driven, thermostatically controlled cooling fan, at once in step with demands for performance and efficiency. And readily capable of delivery both in this package — charging acceleration balanced with high cruising capability (170km/h-plus) and sipping fuel thirst at 12 litres/100km (24mpg) on the EPA city cycle, eight litres/100km on the highway cycle.

A standard five-speed transmission with "overdrive" fifth and four fairly close-matched main ratios helps to satisfy these two conflicting ideals.

The happy combination is simply Fiat's clever capitalisation of the modern blurring of sedan/GT roles. The birth of the supercar and the emancipation of the sedan as a grand touring car breached the boundaries in the late 1960s/early 1970s. Sedans and sports cars crossed previously unbroken separation lines into each other's territories. Besides vague infringements, there were blatant examples. Porsches and other sports cars raced in the categories of "production touring" around the world; pure sedans ran as GT cars. The overlap opened the starting gate on enterprising hybrids, and this car is a classic example at the economic end of the scale.

"You could start an automotive wailing wall with the people who thought they bought wisely two, four or even six years ago."

Fiat proved it in rallying. Abarth-versioned Fiat 131 sedans humping 223 (DIN) bhp mills and rally refinements blasted the conventional rallymasters off European roads. They took out the world championship in 1977, 1978 and last year. Counted among the opponents were Porsche, Mercedes, Peugeot and Lancia (the Stratos, a purpose-built but limited-production racing sports car is the only other car to have won the championship three times).

Besides creating an image to promote a healthy sales environment, the feeling is reflected in the car. In standard nick, Oz-spec, the car is already a scaled-down rally/racer. It would probably be competitive in club events straight off the showroom floor (just add regulation bits). Certainly, it points and goes like a regular rally car, and is one of the few that will hang-out almost at right-angles on gravel and still answer the helm and throttle. It can be steered on the loud pedal, and it will hold an opposite lock slide round a hairpin by using either throttle or wheel. You can even do crazy things like brake mid-apex and still use oversteer to keep you out of the weeds.

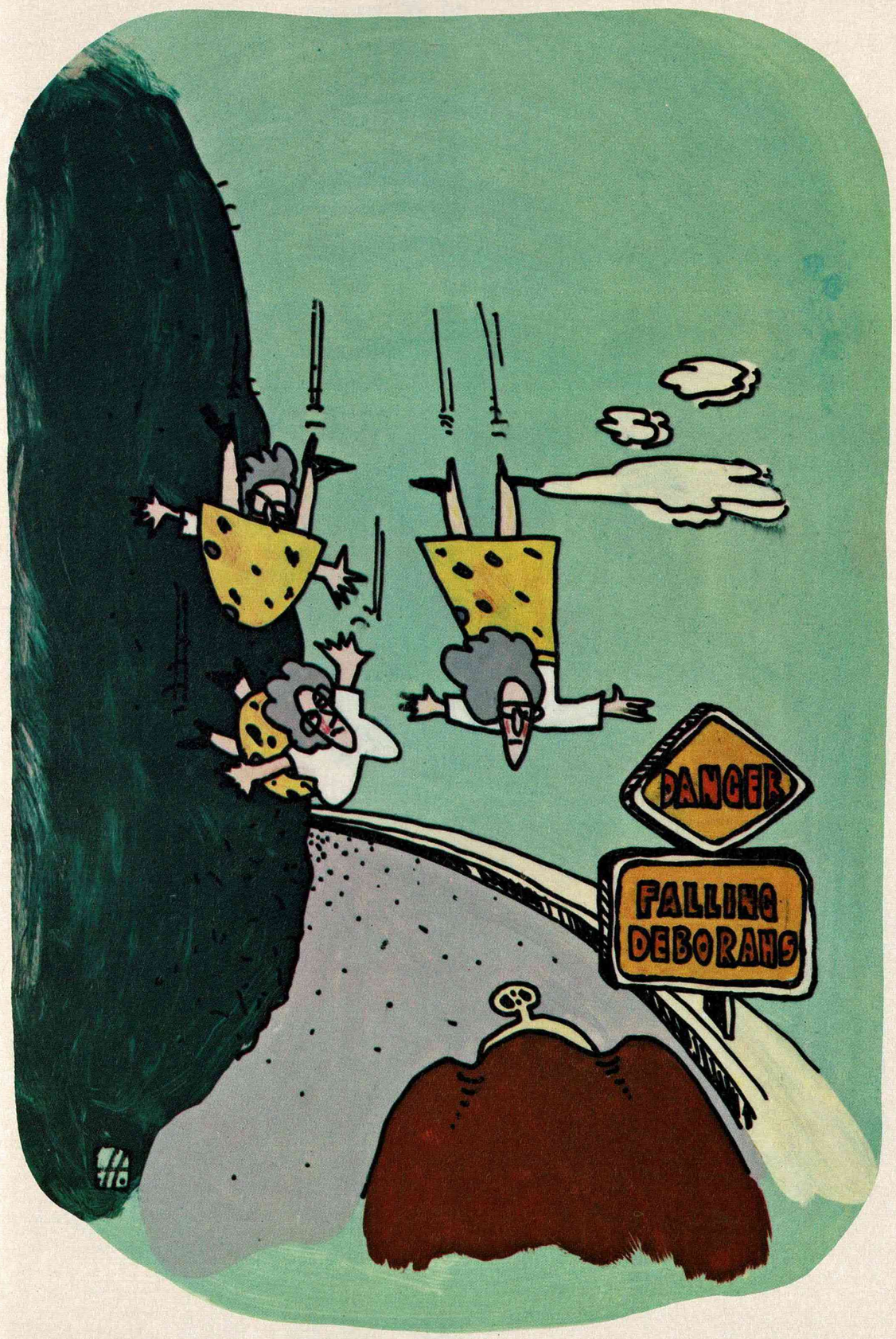
On dirt, it is one of the safest, most forgiving cars imaginable. And that's not all — it's good on the blacktop. Round the race circuit, it laps as fast as the best current series production cars in showroom stock trim (round some circuits, anyway).

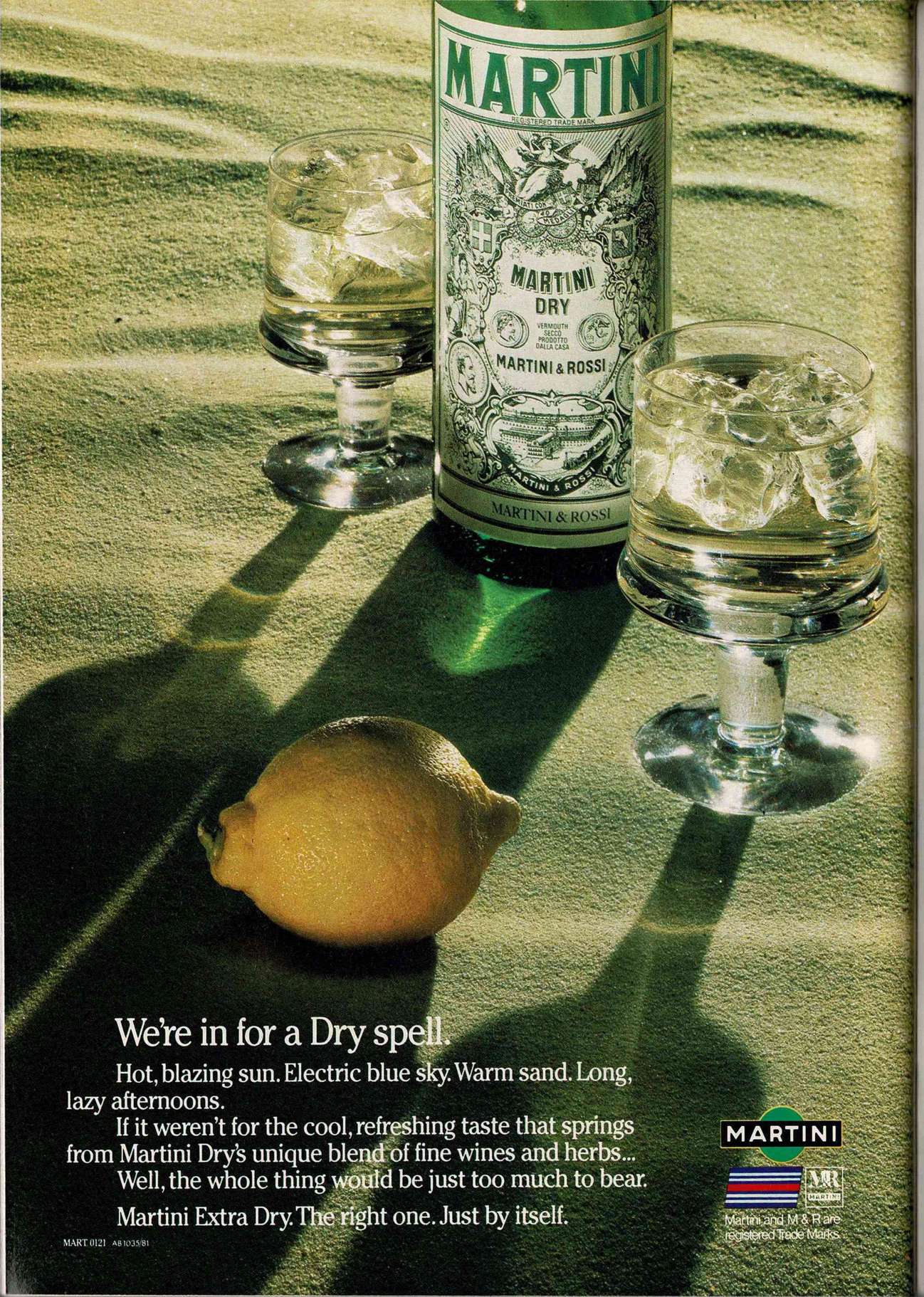
This is the sort of performance that is detouring a growing mass of thinking motorists from the conventional salesroom doors of local and Japanese emporiums, because it is the sort of car that is forcing Australian motoring opinion out of its isolation to confront some pretty staggering facts. Like how can this car match the specification, performance, equipment and price of local/Japanese-assembled vehicles, despite a stunning import duty slug? Or why haven't we approached this level of mechanical refinement/efficiency — considering this car's base specs are more than seven years old?

While Australian motorists are pondering such moot points, Fiat is plugging any loopholes in the argument. The bungs which shut out most of the opposition noise include 12/20,000km warranty, low service intervals (generally 10,000km), and a broader dealer network (80 Australia-wide). Then add some finishing touches — some rust-proofing procedures to help bury old reputations, stiffening and strengthening of the shell to add muscle and reduce noise, vibration harshness (NVH factor) and sound-proofing against our quaint road system.

There are some chinks in the armor, including slow delivery (in some cases), the possibility of inadequate spare parts stockholding and access to stock in remote areas (including cost problems), the unproven issue involving the conflict of superior European assembly/finish, with possibly Australian-unsuited materials, and the question of resale value.

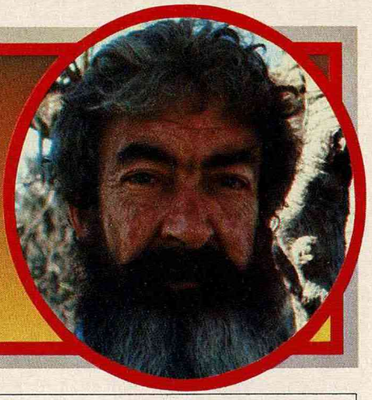
Motoring is like motor racing. You can get the drop on the rest at the start, but it's a long way to the flag. The rules have changed for winning the various events — performance, economy, practicality. You could start an automotive wailing wall with the people who "bought wisely" two, four, six or eight years ago, such is the rate of change affecting motoring and its costs. In the end, you might as well enjoy yourself. You won't be able to do it in a boring car — you will need something like the Fiat SuperBrava.





THE GRUMPY GOURMET

You will eat, drink & be merry or you'll have Sam Orr to answer to.



THE PERFECT STEAK

EVERY adult male Australian ever born lives with the benign and fervent misbelief that he can cook the perfect steak. That's why all those barbecue outfitters out there wax fat on sales of rather stupid chef's outfits (rather like junior doctor's kits, actually) consisting of hat and apron complete with idiotic slogans.

Somehow, the customers believe these kits possess souls — perhaps if one is lucky, that of the late, great Alexis Soyer. Thus, by putting the objects on one's person, one becomes — Shazam! — the superman of the stove. Fat chance.

Though cooking a steak for one (or for a dozen) is absolute simplicity, it is as well one of the most damnably difficult tasks to perform. Pheasant under glass is a snap by comparison; but why on earth anybody in his right senses would want to smash a glass dome to get at a rather indifferent and dry bird is beyond my comprehension.

And as we are entering the festive season, or are damned near in the middle of it, being awash with turkey and gallons of bubbling anything, one feels in very great need of something simple — a piece of real meat just to restore one's sanity. After about the tenth sit-down dinner with everything, one craves a plain steak with a simple tossed salad. Nothing more, nothing less.

One might as well start at the butcher's shop window, and it is here that the trouble usually begins. Despite the statements put out by cattlemen and the meat industry as a whole, by and large, Australians get an indifferent to lousy product to start off with. Apart from the fact that by both American and European standards, all cuts of Australian steak are startlingly tough, the average product of the butcher's shop possesses all the culinary enjoyment of warmed-up wet blotting paper.

This state of affairs is because of three factors. The first is that meat in Australia is not quality graded. Beef is beef is beef, and lots of luck to all those who sail in her. The second is that few butchers have either the time or the inclination to age beef properly. And the third is that no attempt is made to sell or promote the qualities of meat from particular breeds. One knows that every capital city has two, perhaps three, speciality butchers providing aged meat, but the average man hasn't got the time (or the petrol money) to charge all over the city in search of them.

What he does is to go to his local butcher, buy a piece of rubbish, take it home and cook it. Then he sits down in front of the disaster and wonders what in the name of God went wrong. It happened to me quite recently. I was batching at the time, and I was in a hurry and in need of a steak, so I went to my butcher, and against my own inner advice, bought that most infamous of all Australian cuts — a T-bone. I got it home, worked on it for a while with some lemon juice, then cooked it over high heat. Not only was it a disaster in itself, but it ruined my wine. And when that happens, I get very annoyed indeed.

Without getting into cuts of steak for the moment, one of the problems of buying a steak out of the window is that all ready-cut pieces of beef are sliced too thinly. Some are so thin, in fact, that they are almost transparent. Thus, if you are cooking one of these pieces of meat, by the time you get some color up on both sides, you are left with a grey and juiceless interior. A good steak of whatever cut should be at least 2cm thick. For two people, a T-bone 3cm thick is quite marvellous, as is the eye of the rump. Though fillet steak is usually cut 2 to 3cm thick, I personally find it a more than somewhat tasteless piece of the meat, completely lacking in character. A fillet steak has to have a sauce of some nature or other to dolly it up.

Now apart from the usual rump, fillet, T-bone and sirloin steaks, some butchers are at least offering what they either call strip sirloins, or New York-cut steaks. The French tend to call these cuts *entrecote*. Basically, they are sirloins which have been carefully stripped and shaped, as it were. They are expensive, but if they are thick, are excellent value and to my mind have the best flavor of all.

The two principles of cooking any cut of steak by the simple grilling method is high heat and speed. A piece of standard advice to "the woman of the house" in a pre-World War Two cookbook I once read stated that "you should turn on the grill before you take your hat off after a shopping trip". Translated to the male world of the 1980s, this is simply turn the grill on before you have your first drink. Having heated the grill, whether it is gas or electric, the second cardinal rule is *no salt*.

Salt toughens meat fibres, and also crusts and dries the outside of the cut, so add your salt *after* the steak has been cooked. Pepper, on the other hand, apart from its own heat and flavor, tends to draw out the flavor of any piece of meat, so a slight dusting of pepper on either side is in order. Freshly ground and rather coarse black pepper is best, but if it comes out of a shaker, so be it.

Big strips of fat around the meat should be left on, even if you don't like fat. The fat gives the meat both taste and succulence, which is why primarily thick cuts of fillet steak are wrapped with either a piece of sheet lard or bacon. But to prevent the fat strip pulling the meat out of whack, cut it through in several place to the beginning of meat muscle.

Although to my mind the best grilling heat is supplied by charcoal, most of us are not rich enough to have a special charcoal or volcanic rock barbecue built into our kitchens, so it is gas or electricity. The heat from either source can dry the surface of the meat out very rapidly, so before you place the piece of meat on high

"A steak should be turned only once, not tumbled over and over like the contents of an automatic clothes dryer. And use tongs – don't jab at it with a fork – that lets juices out."

heat, put a dab of butter on the surface to receive the flame. This helps in the browning and also gives succulence. Repeat the process when turning the meat.

On the turning process itself: a steak should be turned only *once*, not tumbled over and over like the contents of an automatic clothes dryer. And use tongs — don't jab at it with a fork, because this merely lets the juices out and they finish in the bottom of the pan, rather than in your stomach, which is sheer waste. Serve the thing on a hot plate; don't let it freeze to death.

Now that's the operation, pure and simple. It's thickness of meat (2cm) and fast heat, plus the fervent hope that you have a decent butcher who supplies a strip sirloin or true middle-cut rump. As a final note on the meat itself, don't in any circumstances buy bits and pieces called "grilling steak", "as good as rump", frying steak or round. They are all universally terrible. There are also butchers who can slice a piece of bladebone to resemble rump steak to the uninitiated. Pray that you haven't got one of those.

Outside of these simple principles, there are a number of things one can do at both ends of the cooking process to improve the odds to more than evens. Simple marinades can improve both texture and flavor. The simplest of these is lemon juice, because citric acid breaks down tough meat fibres, but it should be handled cautiously, otherwise all you are going to taste is bloody lemon juice and nothing else. On, say, a 250g steak, place the steak on a plate and squeeze a little lemon juice over the surface. Let it stand five minutes, turn it over and put a little more juice on. Another five minutes, and it goes under the grill. Needless to say, the meat should be at room temperature before this is attempted. If your steak is in the fridge, take it out and let it warm itself up for half an hour or so before even contemplating cooking it. The ground pepper can be sprinkled on the steak at the same time as the application of lemon juice because they work well together.

A wine marinade is just that: wine, but once again, don't let the meat lie around in it for more than 15 minutes, otherwise everything gets dreadfully soggy. Red wine is best, but it should be a dry red. Half a bottle of invalid port is no help whatsover. It is quite easy to make your own marinade combinations as long as you retain a sense of balance. If I am barbecuing outside, a mixture of dry red wine, the juice of half a lemon, plus a crushed clove of garlic and a very judicious dash or so of soy sauce, is pleasant. For a slightly more oriental touch to improve dry meats, a teaspoon or so of sesame oil, plus a couple of shavings of root ginger, are fine, but when making any marinade, put the ingredients together at least a couple of hours ahead of time, and let them stand in a bowl at room temperature to give them time to amalgamate. Then stir them around before adding the meat.

While cooking, a little of the marinade can be brushed over the surface of the steak to keep it moist, but don't overdo this, otherwise one is left with a rather weird version of a grilled stew.

For an addition afterwards, apart from the flanking pots of various types of mustards, several kinds of hard butters are excellent, and any mug can make them.

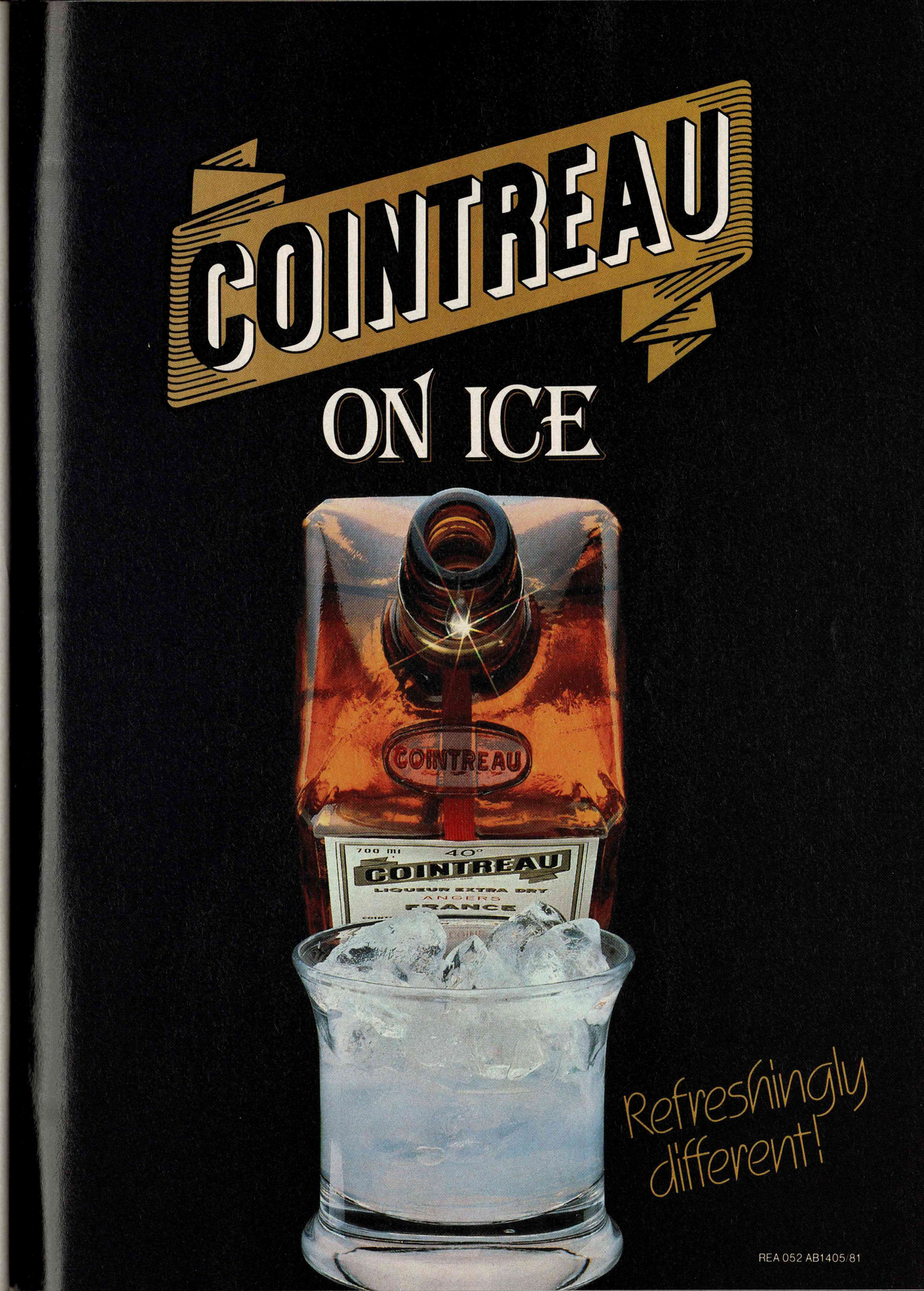
Of these, the great classic is green garlic butter. Now depending on the number sitting down to dine, take, say, 250g of butter and allow it to soften — but not melt. Meanwhile, finely chop a big bunch of parsley and crush the cloves of garlic. Mix the garlic and the parsley with the butter, place the mixture on a sheet of foil and roll it up, then place in the freezer until it sets hard. The shape should be long and round so that, when serving, it can be unwrapped and a circle or so placed to melt on top of each steak. It should be *very* green, so you may need two bunches of parsley to achieve this effect, and it all depends on the parsimonious habits of your friendly neighborhood greengrocer.

Any herb butter can be made in exactly the same manner. Fresh tarragon is good, but use it by itself. Chives are also good for those who like a delicate onion flavor, but won't have anything to do with garlic. A combination of fresh marjoram or oregano, plus just a little sage, is fine, but rosemary butter I find abominable. Personally, you can make grass butter for all I care. They're your taste buds.

Steak doesn't really require any more complicated dressing up than this. The meat should always remain the focus of the dish and should not be overwhelmed by clag sauces any more than it should be stood on its end on a piece of fried bread, then have a piece of half-warmed canned gooseliver pate slapped atop it. Those sorts of steaks are pieces of foolishness for people who have more money than sense. But there is one slightly fancy number which is enjoyable. It is the pepper steak. In Australia at present, pepper steaks seem to be strange concoctions with cream sauces, but the traditional pepper steak is one in which there is no sauce. This is the one steak dish where it is really essential to have a frying pan.

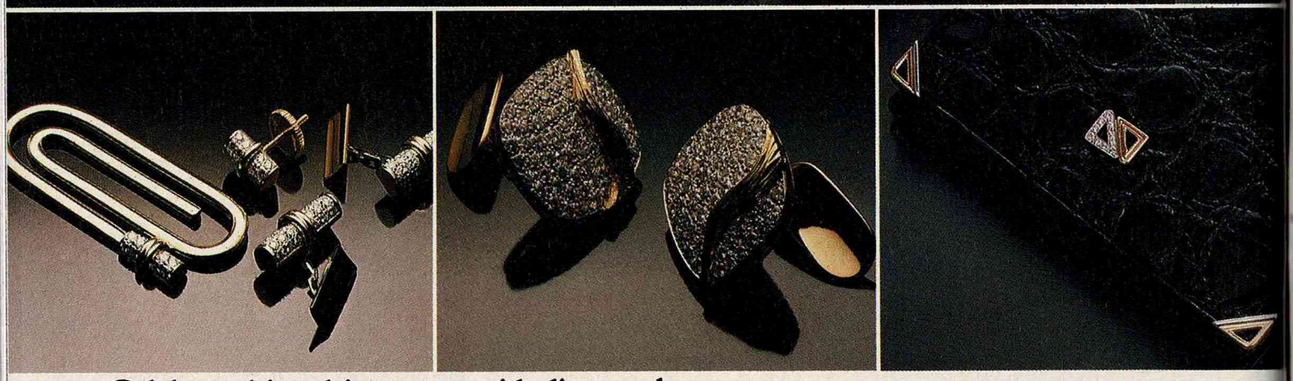
What you do is either get hold of a large amount of already prepared cracked peppercorns, or smash some up with a mortar and pestle. You then spread them over a plate, take a piece of rump 1.5 to 2cm thick, with a good edging of fat, and press each side into the corns so they adhere. In the meantime, heat a heavy iron frying pan brush with a little oil until it is very hot indeed, place the steak in it and sear quickly on both sides. Then reduce the heat a little so the inside has time to cook through a little, and serve immediately. The contrast in this dish is between the juicy sealed pink meat and the rough and fiery crust given by the peppers. Once again, it is the simplicity; a cream sauce would just muck it up. For me, an abstemious watercress salad that's dressed with walnut oil plus a touch of lemon juice, with a bottle of heavy red from Rutherglen, would complete the perfection. If you *must* have potatoes, freshly cooked and scrupulously fatless potato chips are the classic accompaniment for this meal.

In all the above, I have avoided definite cooking times. Apart from the fact that heat sources differ in intensity from stove to stove, one man's *bleu* is another man's well done. And one supposes at the end of all this, if the whole business appears to be too much to cope with, you can always hurl the stove out of the window and live the rest of your life on steak tartare. It did wonders for the lifestyle of Ghengis Khan.



De Beers

She thought men at the top
were dull dressers.



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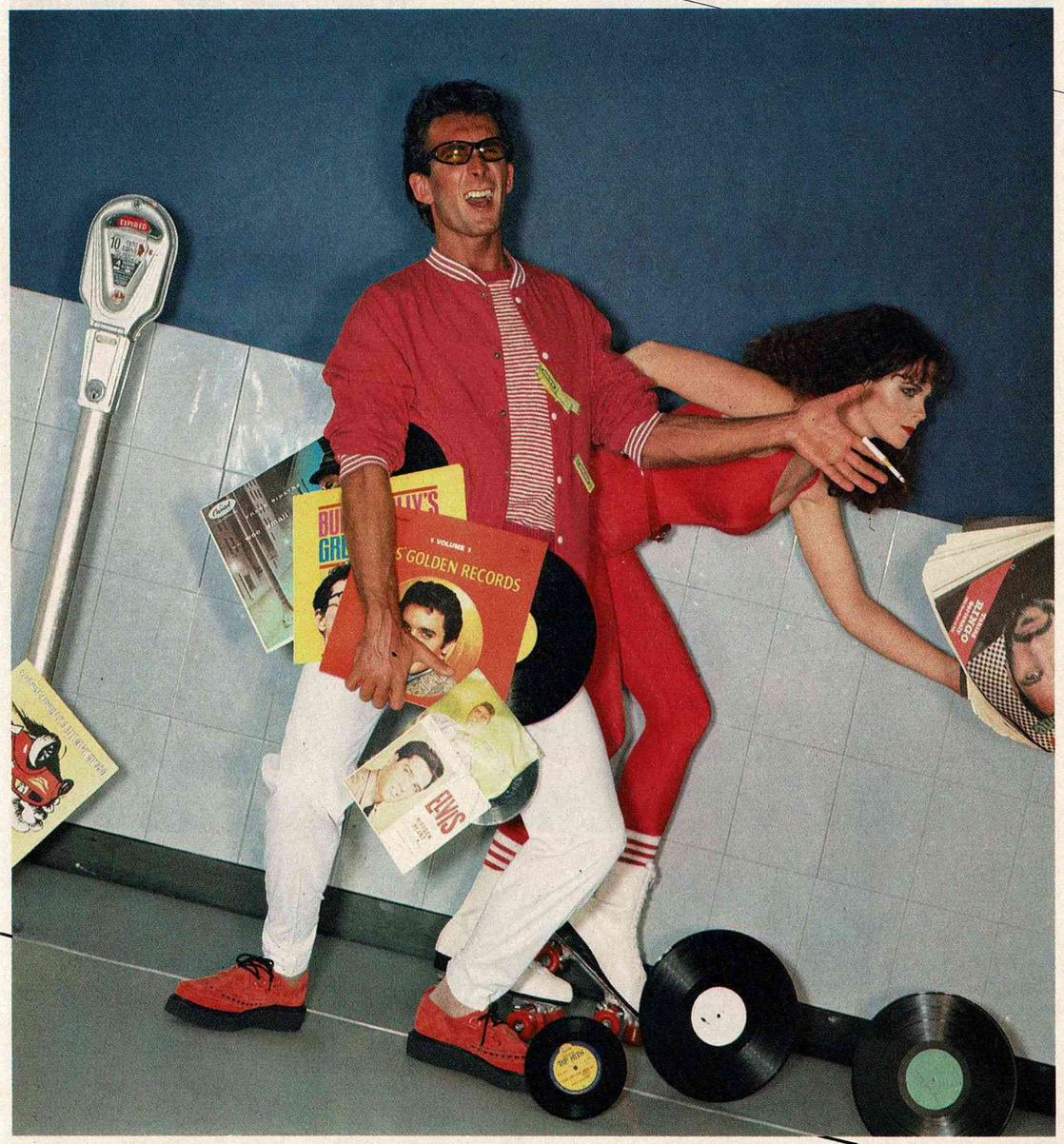


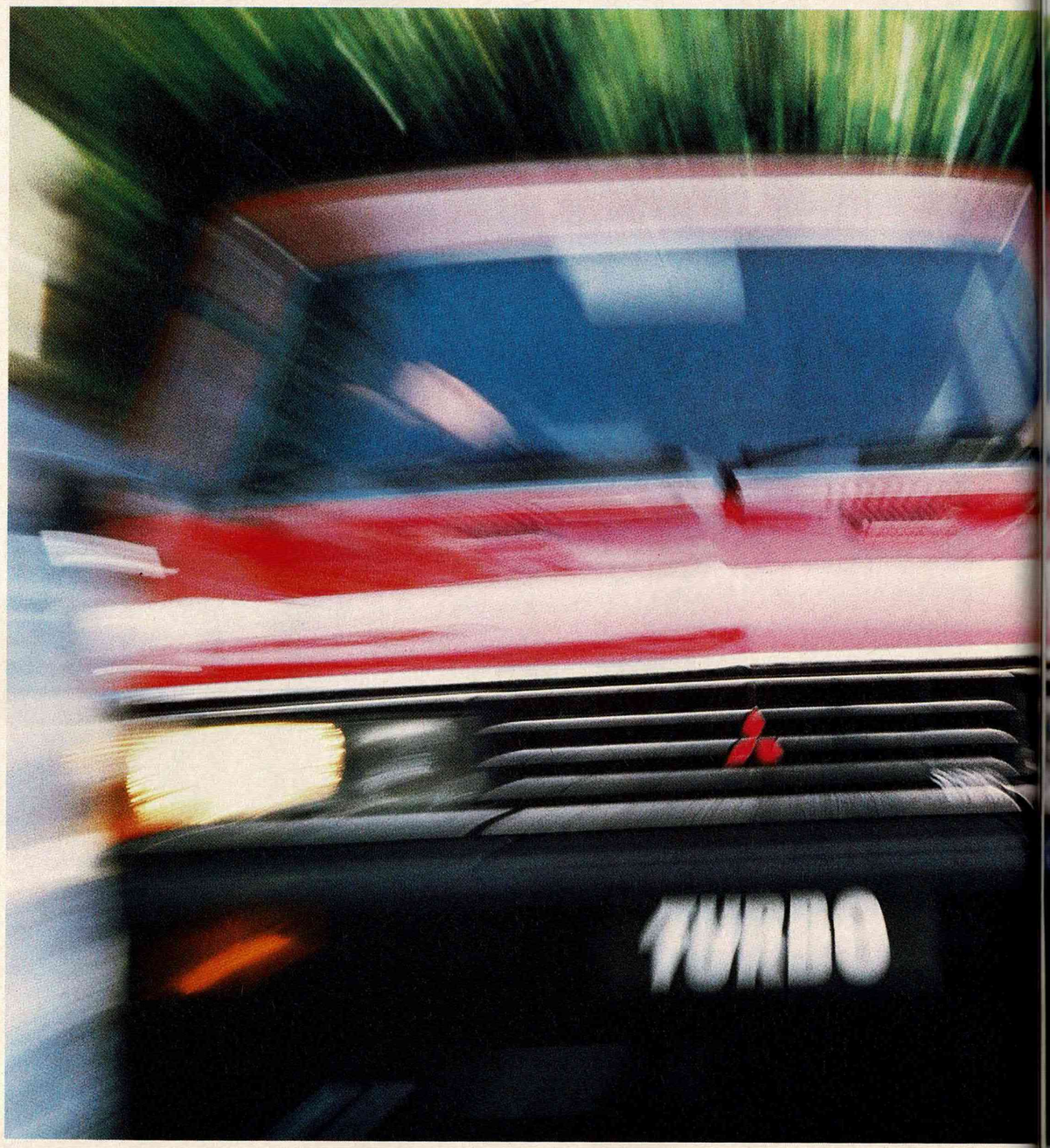
Photography by Colin Stead

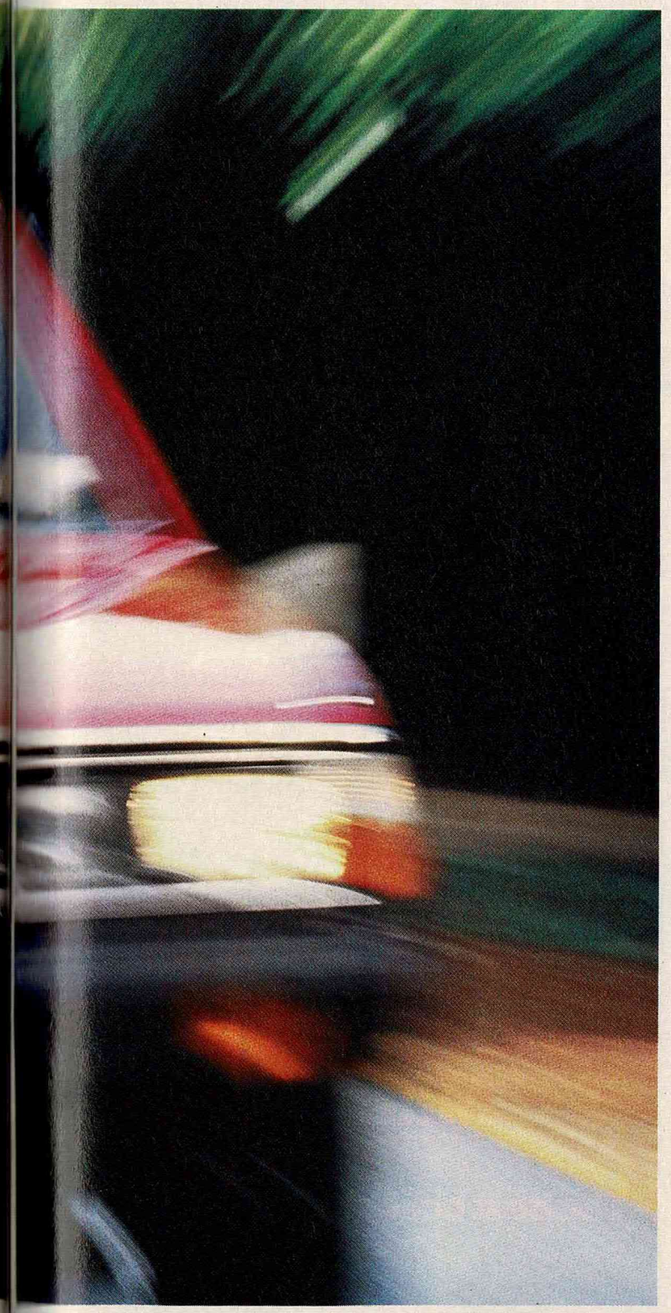
Previous page: White seersucker pants by Pierre Charbonnier, $49.50; red and white knitted sweater, $43; red cotton bomber jacket, $69.50. All clothing from GQ Menswear, Sydney, Red suede shoes from Mr Figgins.
This page: T-shirt, $29.50; shorts, $69.50; belt, $27.50. All from Il Tacchino. Yellow sneakers from Mr Figgins.

Tiles courtesy of Classic Ceramics, Leichhardt; Leotard by Bloch's; Skates and tennis accessories by Mick Simmons.

Below: Khaki pants, $56; T-shirt, $29; belt, $13. All from Valdis Alexander. Pink seersucker jacket by Pierre Charbonnier, $155.

Sigma Turbo.





The new Sigma Turbo.

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Then you will never forget it.

When that Turbo begins to cut in, you have a reserve of power to accelerate out of trouble, and to overtake in a flash.

However, the additional power has brought with it a few additional performance features.

The suspension, for example, has been refined. There are now disc brakes on all four of the new Montego 15" cast alloy wheels. And they, in turn, are now fitted with Pirelli P6 steel belt radials.

So, on the road the Sigma Turbo is solid and firm. With five people and all their luggage aboard, the car can safely handle the corkscrew curves and hairpin bends of the roads that drivers love to drive.

As far as the exterior of the car is concerned, you can identify it by the striking two tone paint treatment, vents on the bonnet for extra under bonnet cooling, and a different grille and badging—all of which are exclusive to the Sigma Turbo.

Then, inside the car, there's an AM/FM/MPX radio-tape deck combination with four speakers which you can enjoy in the comfort of airconditioning and the luxury of honeycomb velour upholstery.

These additions and refinements give the Turbo an individual and distinctive character.

But in engineering terms,the car is still very much a Sigma, the car that changed the image of the four cylinder car.

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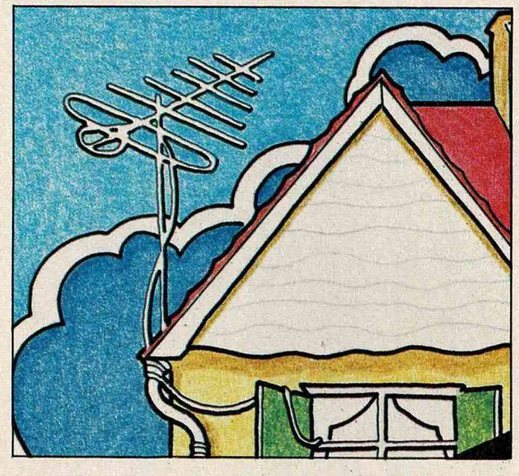
MONEY

TO LET: THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN DREAM



LET'S ASSUME you're financially healthy, have a steady job, a car and a savings account. You even have money to invest. Terrific! What should you do with it? You could put it in the bank (interest-bearing deposits pay around 12 percent these days), but you'll never get rich that way because, after taxes and inflation, 12 percent is in fact more like one percent.

And what about the stock market, or gold futures? Some traders have made fortunes in a day, but prices tend to move in unexpected directions and, when they do, you may well lose all your money. There are always "collectables" — stamps, coins, books. Even sea shells have been known to double their value in a year, but face it — what do you know about sea shells?

As you can see, finding a suitable place to invest your money can be a problem. Life, we've been told, wasn't meant to be easy, but this is one problem which can be solved. The solution is simple — buy a house. That's right, the typical middle-class Australian dream. Your own home is the safest, smartest, and potentially the most lucrative investment you can make. But before I tell you why, it's only fair to confess I have just bought a house, and if everybody reading this follows my advice and buys one, too, then my property is certain to increase in value.

Needless to say, personal gain has not influenced my advice at all, and to show that I am completely objective, I'll admit there is a case to be made for renting rather than buying. The current cost of home ownership is entirely out of proportion to the rent you would be asked to come up with for comparable rental accommodation. Take a recent example: An ad in *The Sydney Morning Herald* offered a home for sale in Mosman (four bedrooms, pool, executive dining room) for $190,000. A buyer with $90,000 should be able to obtain a $100,000 loan over 25 years at a 17 percent daily reducing interest rate (as at 9/81), with repayments of $1392 a month.

To this, the buyer must add interest he would have earned on his $90,000 if he had deposited it in the bank at, say, 15 percent, or $1125 a month. He must also come up with council rates and insurance, taking the all-up cost of the house to, say $2750, a month, or around $635 a week. Granted, Mosman is one of Sydney's more sought-after suburbs, and while it's hard to put a price on status — $635 a week?

The same issue of the *Herald* also listed a house for rent in the same neighborhood (four bedrooms, pool and spa) for $250 a week — almost half the cost — and you don't need an economics degree to see that in terms of current costs, it's cheaper to rent than to buy. The trouble with this argument is that current costs don't tell the whole story. For one thing, we need to consider capital gains. Most Australian suburban houses increase in value from year to year, which means that when it comes time to sell, the home which costs $190,000 in 1981 will be worth many thousands more. In recent years, real estate values have been increasing at rates which more than cover the extra cost of owning, rather than renting. There is, of course, no guarantee that your house will appreciate. House prices do not always keep pace with inflation; they can even fall. However, as things go at present, there is no better investment than a house. Here's why:

Most home buyers finance their homes with credit. That is, you buy now and pay later. Credit provides several advantages. First, as inflation continues to erode the value of the dollar, you can repay your loan with increasingly cheaper dollars. Second, mortgage loans available to home buyers are substantial — far greater than any loan you could otherwise hope to get. These loans permit you to take advantage of *leverage,* which is a powerful investment concept. It multiplies the power of an investment by permitting you to make profits on somebody else's money. Say, for example, you buy a house for $50,000 with a $10,000 deposit, and take out a $40,000 first mortgage.

Several years later, the same house appreciates to $70,000 and you decide to sell. Theoretically, you can pay out the mortgage and be left with $30,000. Since you now have $20,000 more than you started with, your profit is not 40 percent on a $50,000 purchase, but 200 percent on your original $10,000. That's leverage, and it's the reason more people have become rich through real estate than almost any other way in this past half century.

But leverage is not all you have going for you when you buy a house. You also get an income tax break for at least part of your rates, and provided you live in your house for at least a year (or get transferred to a new location), your profit at the time of sale is tax free.

However, even ideal investments have unpleasant aspects. When you buy your house, you'll meet solicitors who will extract various mysterious fees for equally mysterious services; you'll also deal with smooth-talking real estate agents, removalists, bankers and other sorts. In the end, after you've paid the fees and repaired your furniture, you'll have an excellent investment as well as your own place to live. Buying your own house is not only financially intelligent, it's psychologically fulfilling — ask the three million Australians who already own one. —STEVEN SCHWARTZ

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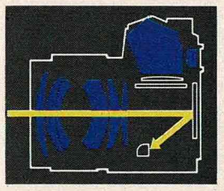

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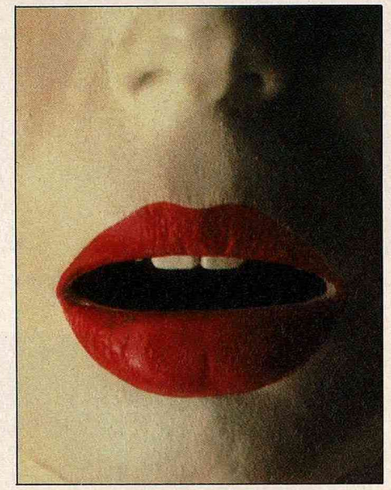
BOOKS

gorky park — a thriller that tops the year's bestseller list

One of the great gifts an author can have is the ability to tune in on what's currently frightening people. It doesn't seem to matter whether he plays fairy godmother with the theme or puts on a bogeyman suit. As long as he does it well — whoosh! There goes another British Columbian forest through the bookstores.

Martin Cruz Smith, in *Gorky Park* (Collins), does it well. He takes that biggest of all modern bogeymen, Soviet Russia, and just at a time when people are starting to see Reds under every bed again, he gives it a human face. He does it through the character of Arkady Renko, a Moscow homicide cop, who comes over as an amiable amalgam of Kojak and Inspector Maigret. One thing Arkady can't stand is the goddamn bureaucracy, and another is the KGB. He believes that the way to get things done is to show a bit of individual initiative. What is this — the reader finds himself asking — you mean the Russians are just like us?

Well, yes and no. There are plenty of nasty Russians here, too, exemplified by Major Pribluda, of the KGB. But just to complicate matters further, several of the Americans are even nastier. The plot of *Gorky Park* is convoluted enough to satisfy the most jaded mystery addict and violent enough to keep the thriller fans flicking through the pages, right from the opening scene, when three mutilated bodies are exposed by the melting snows of April in Moscow's Gorky Park. But the real strength of the book is in its wonderful evocation of the Moscow that ordinary people live in, and the complex characters of the Russians themselves. If you pick up this book hating Russia, you'll probably put it down the same way, but you may well find yourself liking Russians just a little better.



Whoring Around . . . top marks for the cover.

Much has been made in some places of the fact that Martin Cruz Smith, a 38-year-old former newspaperman, only made one visit to Moscow. What is generally not mentioned is that he spent a total of eight years researching the locales and the society in which his story is set — much of it among the emigres and dissidents in his home town of New York. His Moscow is so real, you can smell the spilled vodka in the subway cars. And *Gorky Park* is the sort of thriller you wish you had along every time you find yourself facing a long plane trip or alone in an out-of-town hotel room.

— PAUL DOUGHERTY

•

In *Whoring Around* (Penguin), John Bryson conducts a series of autopsies on the human soul. It is a bleak collection of short stories, although that which supplies the title has a sort of happy ending — like, say, learning that your tumor is benign. Full marks to the cover design which really says it all: an inflated plastic girl-doll on a cold, hard, lonely bed. The whoring in this slender volume is more metaphorical than carnal. "Theirs is a world where scruples are fair exchange for the currencies of fortune and inheritance . . ." the jacket promises, accurately enough. But good motives alone aren't enough to excite social concern; it is vital that we really know the characters to care about them one way or another, and Brysons' are hard to know. Some writers can bring people to life almost in the turn of a phrase; not he with this sorry group of specimens. The problem is compounded by a rather clinical style which may well trace its origins to Brysons' training and practice in Law. On the bonus side, his writing is suitably economical for the form. A paragraph like: "Snow and Christmas fell on London on the same day. For Elinore both were grey and loveless." Or the preamble: "It did not seem strange to anyone that, while Judith was sent off at the beginning of first term to a boarding school one hundred and fifty kilometres away, Elinore was taking extravagant precautions to prevent her dogs straying further from her than the front gate . . ." sums up at once the author's strengths and his weaknesses. My favorite story is Inventory, about an inept heir stumbling in the fiscal footsteps of his soulless father, one of several which have previously appeared in various upmarket publications. And the one I liked least, an oddly obscure piece of mumbo-jumbo called The Routine, has won, I note, the 1979 Patricia Hackett Award at the University of Western Australia. Oh well, maybe it's just me that's thick.

— GLENN RUSSELL

•

In spite of the protestations of Prime Minister Fraser, Treasure Howard and Tax Commissioner O'Reilly that tax avoidance is immoral and involves ripping off one's fellow citizens, there is no doubt that every taxpayer has at one time or another tried to fiddle his tax return. Including the aforementioned three gentlemen. But nobody has yet come up with a system to beat Peter Clyne's. Quite simply, he maintains that the only way to beat the system is to ignore it. So he doesn't lodge tax returns. And he hasn't since 1962. "Taxation is confiscation!" Clyne wrote in his earlier *How to Survive a Financial Crisis:* "The bandit who robs you on your way home by brandishing a revolver in your face has no less right to your money than the tax collector who robs you at the point of a loaded assessment!" How's that?

Clyne's latest book, *Outlaw Among Lawyers: The Peter Clyne Story* (Cassell) is not an autobiography according to Dr Clyne. Although he doesn't say it, one feels that it's merely another vehicle for making money. And Peter Clyne does need to make money. He is a self-confessed exponent of the good life, "preferably with a blonde, a bottle of Dom Perignon, a Corona-Corona and a lakeside chalet in rural Switzerland."

The author blatantly flaunts his desire to make money. One chapter in *Outlaw,* subtitled how to Make

A Tax-free Million, begins: "This book is not intended to be a substitute for your coming to see me and paying me a hefty fee. After all, even a rebel needs a bit of financial support." At his 1981 Tax Rebels' Congress, he was selling copies of the book (recommended retail price $12.95) for $50. He joked with his audience about the premium, explaining that the extra $37.05 was for his autograph. The three dozen-odd books he had didn't last long, and during an intermission he was seen lugging in a large suitcase with more.

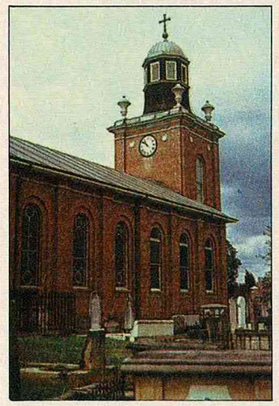
What is it about Peter Clyne that makes him compulsively appealing? For a start, he is a wonderful storyteller, drawing on his rich experiences to continually spice his conversation with rib-splitting anecdotes. A former dux of Sydney Boys' High School and a Sydney University law graduate, he practised law from 1949 to 1959, when he was disbarred. He has been a magistrate in Zambia, and a prison inmate in Texas. And lately he has proved the nemesis of The Fiscal Fiend (tax commissioner). It is all recounted in *Outlaw Among Lawyers*, but, despite the publicity, the book, doesn't really tell anyone how to avoid taxes. Peter Clyne is too smart for that. If you really want to find out about his tax avoidance schemes (involving Liechtenstein anstalts and four-way tangoes), you'll have to pay his exorbitant fees (as high as $50,000). In the meantime, spend $12.95 for one of the most amusing and absorbing pieces of drivel on the market.

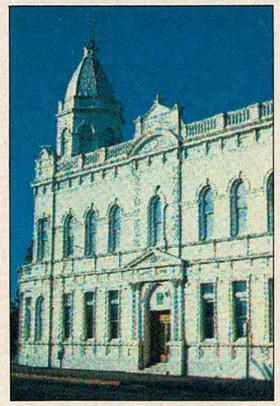
— A.B. BEAR

•

This book is immediately tantalising in its subject matter. Even in this post-Lennon era of renewed interest in the Beatles where various authors are risking overkill, any real fan is eager to inspect what might be an explanation of what is frequently referred to as "the greatest phenomenon of our times". Who can judge the facticity of historical writing such as this except for those

Contrasts in preservation from the dust jacket of *The Open Air Museum.*





involved? However, assuming research is correct, *Shout — The True Story of the Beatles* (Thomas Nelson) is a shocking exposé of not so much the Beatles as of the hype that surrounded them, their naivety and their victimisation. The chronicle begins at the birth of each of the Beatles and a fifth influential character: Brian Epstein. Interesting and little-known tales about their backgrounds unfold, leading to the fated point of fusion. Early struggles in Liverpool and Germany are recorded without gloss, and the progress of the band from hit after hit to heady world tours is thoroughly examined. However, the real shocker is Brian Epstein and the mismanagement of enormous proportions. Epstein, it seemed, failed repeatedly to realise the potential profits he could have claimed. American and English businessmen, anonymous and smart, reaped more than their fair share of Beatlemania and left Epstein with egg on his face.

Whether author Philip Norman finds himself biased in light of Lennon's death, or whether the truth is that Lennon was the only genius in the group, the story seems to read as John Lennon and the Beatles. For anyone who has ever been moved by a Beatles' ballad, shocked or touched by a Lennon sentiment, tickled by a Ringo witticism, this book will be of utmost importance. It is not a fairy tale about four boys from nowhere who all embarked upon a magical mystery tour to incredibly dizzy heights of fame and fortune. Rather, the truths that *Shout* reveals are that the pinnacle of success was achieved at incredible cost.

— KATHERINE COLLINS

•

The Open Air Museum (George Allen and Unwin) is an architectural history of New South Wales since European settlement nearly two centuries ago. The authors are a lecturer in geography at Sydney University, Dr Dennis Jeans, and a lecturer in urban studies at Macquarie University, Dr Peter Spearitt.

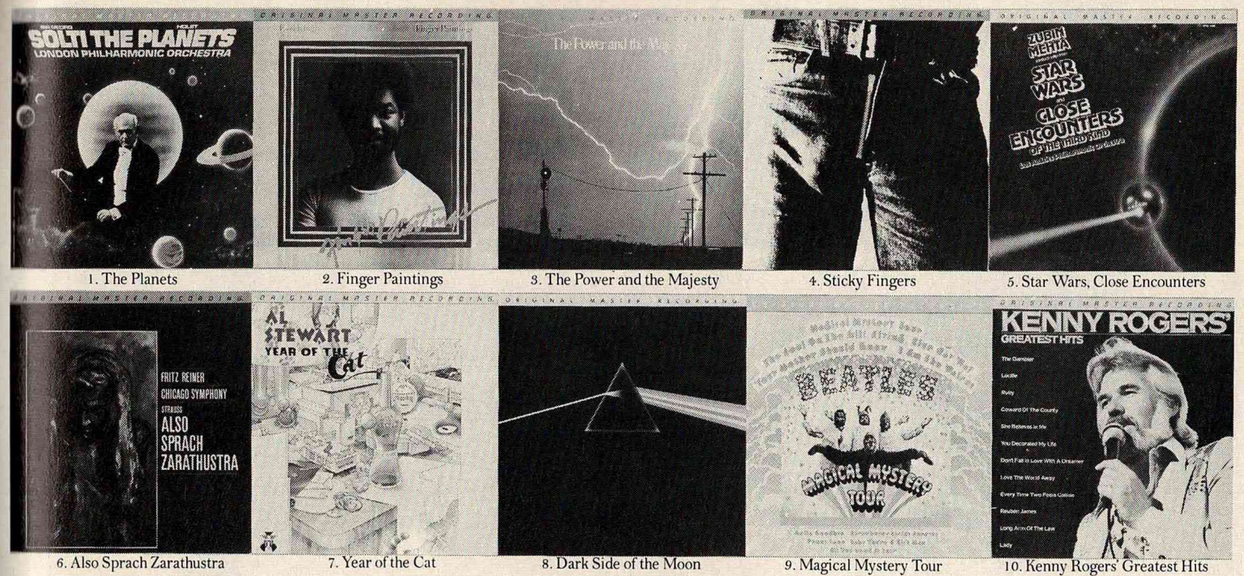
Their brief is to relate the pattern of settlement and development of Australia's premier State to the architectural legacy — not just of particular buildings, but of whole towns and cities that survive today. That means the roads, bridges, railways, waterways and wharves. It means domestic housing, public, commercial and industrial buildings and it means special chapters on each of NSW's most important cities: Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle.

It is illustrated with hundreds of black and white photographs, all with ample explanatory captions, and it has all the paraphenalia of a definitive reference book: maps, charts, statistical tables, bibliography and index. In the accuracy and density of detail it is exhaustive and nobody is ever likely to challenge the ground it has staked out as its own.

But it does raise one niggling doubt. *Open Air Museum* was produced with the help of the Heritage Council of NSW. The preface and the epilogue are appeals to readers to preserve our heritage, not just the fine 19th century buildings, but also more modest and utilitarian constructions, equally part of our heritage, against the avarice of developers and the apathy and confusion of planning bodies. Rather than mount pictures of them in dusty museums, say the authors, what is precious in our architectural history should continue as part of contemporary life, even if it has been adapted to new functions.

To which I respond: "Hear, hear!" The trouble is that *Open Air Museum* reads like a text book aimed at a high school or first year tertiary student in economic history or social geography. It's all head and no heart and it's not going to rouse the protective instincts.

— CHRIS ASHTON



1. The Planets 2. Finger Paintings 3. The Power and the Majesty 4. Sticky Fingers 5. Star Wars, Close Encounters

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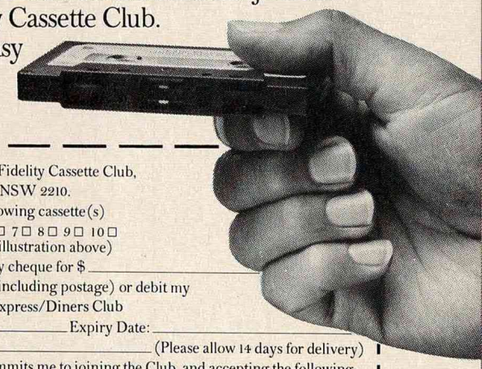

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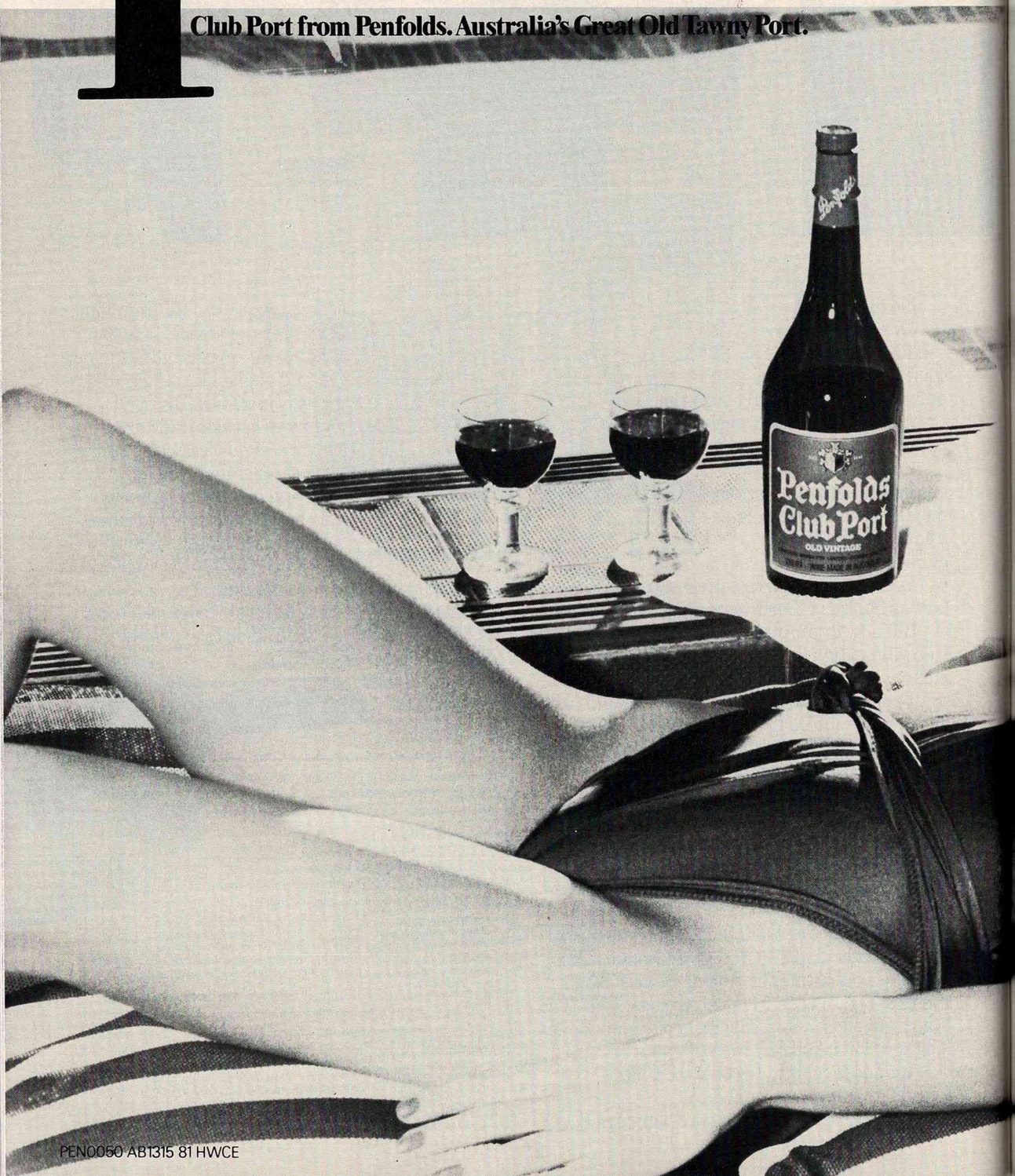


PEN0050 AB1315 81 HWCE

I was looking forward
to the rest of the evening
just as much as he was -
and then I served him
mere Scotch
instead of

AB1191/81 S527PB

MUSIC

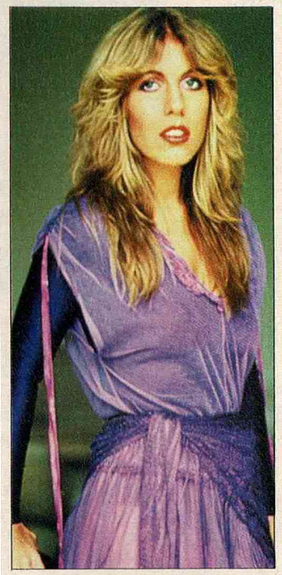
some high-steppin' ladies lead the parade on this month's bandwagon

No More Dirty Deals (Polydor) is the first album from the Johnny Van Zant Band and it slots straight into the tradition of great southern rock 'n' roll. If it were anywhere else it would be easy to be cynical about utilising the family name (Ronnie Van Zant fronted Lynyrd Skynyrd, the members of which died in a plane crash a few years ago, and yet another brother, Donnie heads .38 Special). But in the tradition of so many others, including the Allmans and the Winter Brothers, the Van Zant name means something in the rockin' South. Johnny and company paid their dues in assorted Jacksonville, Florida bars in various bands until they were old enough to stop dodging the law and recruit the right personnel for the current band. With nephew Robbie Morris as drummer and Robbie Gay on guitar, Van Zant had the basis. He added another guitarist in Erik Leif-Lundgren and bassist Danny Clausman. For the album, the legendary Al Kooper kept the flame burning by producing the work, and he's made a great job collecting these songs, penned mainly by Van Zant and fellow band members. The highly memorable Standing In The Darkness is an epitaph for Ronnie, and along with the Eddie Floyd-Steve Cropper rager, 634-5789, just about steals the whole show.

•

On the two albums before *I Am The Phoenix* (Rocket) Judie Tzuke was obviously just finding her feet as a rock 'n' roll trouper. With a bit of on-the-road madness under her belt and a lot more affinity with a tight band, she is a far more accomplished performer than she was on the recent *Sportscar* album. With the gifted Mike Paxman as writing co-pilot and the person obviously wielding the weight as guitarist and band leader, Tzuke has never sounded more professional nor more in control of her own very considerable talents. Her writing was never in question, but on previous works there were often questions posed about the production or musical support, all of which served to promote Judie as something less than one of the brightest solo talents to appear in England for some time. Her voice, while lacking in strength, has an adequate range which lends itself well to the multi-tiered harmonies on a song called Higher and Higher.

Come Hell or Waters High is a strong pitch for



Tzuke: no ashes for her

the mood piece of the album, with Tzuke's soulful vocals getting a perfect elbow rest in the powerful synthesiser playing of Andy Clark. The verdict: it's a winner.

The lady's 1980 Australian visit was the inspiration for City of Swimming Pools (an obvious glimpse of the blue-dotted Sydney from the air) in which she queries the cultural roots of Australians and asks: "Why is it I can't see any other history? Where did their dreamtime go?" Disturbing, but obviously not just a pretty face.

•

Just when you were about to ask "What ever happened to Johnny Rivers?" along he comes looking younger and smarter than ever with a new album called *Borrowed Time* (Interfusion). It's conservative in the sense that it labels itself with no particular trend except for the reassuring fact that Rivers can still sing a good white soul song. To support the gift, he's used the marvellous Muscle Shoals Sound Rhythm section on all tracks.

Drop in the added luxury of Dennis "The Captain" Dragon engineering on vocal and string sessions on a cut called Living Alone, and the sum total is record free of pretension but strong in professional input. Rivers is essentially a vocalist and, in pinpointing the man at his best, one can almost nominate any song on *Borrowed Time*. A Little White Lie conjures memories of Otis Redding in the ease of vocal delivery, and on Living Alone he shows a delicacy to support the song's soft Latin feel. *Borrowed Time* is not one of your love at first sight albums, but in a few years time you'll be amazed at just how well it has stood the test of time.

•

David Lindley is such a mysterious yet talented figure that when he said *El Rayo-X* (Asylum) was one way of unloading many of the musical influences that had been floating around in his head for years, nobody knew quite what to expect. A surprise? Sure, that and more. *El Rayo-X* is a finely relaxed collection of styles and tunes casually translated by Lindley's excellent playing and the support of superb session men. Principally, it might be a monument raised to the influence of black music on American rock and roll. But that only tells half the story. Lindley, the ace session man behind so many fine West Coast acts, has taken a couple of his own tunes and a satchel of old standards (mainly

Johnny Rivers, a soul singer making it on *Borrowed Time*.

written by black men) and shot them through with a good squirt of reggae, a little bit of boogie and left a bit of straight rock 'n' roll.

Tu-ber-Cu Lucas and the Sinus Blues by legendary New Orleans boss of the 88s, Huey "Piano" Smith, is just one example. Smith's rollicking left-handed piano style gave the original version a great bar-room feel. Lindley has relayed the sentiment to a reggae beat and produced a lively cover without losing the earthy humor of the original lyrics. Peter Tosh's reggae version of the 1965 tune, Don't Look Back, is very familiar, but Lindley goes a step ahead with a dazzling guitar break which elevates the tune to a new height.

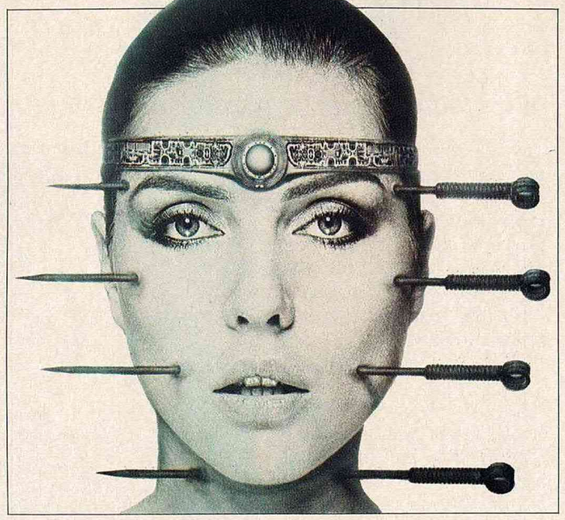
If you can remember Lindley's show-stopping falsetto on Jackson Browne's live version of Stay, from the *Running On Empty* album, you'll be relieved to learn that he has since taken singing lessons. They have enabled him to give adequate treatment to old favorites like Twist and Shout and Bye Bye Love, and pull off one unbelievable cover of the old K. C. Douglas tune, Mercury Blues.

El Rayo-X was produced by Jackson Browne and Greg Ladanyi, and it is obvious that not enough can be said about their part in making Lindley's solo debut a successful flight.

•

Debbie Harry's vacation from under the Blondie umbrella was always a certainty, but nobody was really sure about the timing. *KooKoo* (Chrysalis) is the album which marks the event, and it is a carefully orchestrated piece of image moulding by the remarkable Ms Harry. The growing out of the blonde locks tied in well for the photographing of an album cover which (strangely) evokes images of both a young Maggie Tabberer and Emerson, Lake and Palmer's *Brain Salad Surgery.*

Guitarists Chris Stein and Nile Rodgers plus bassist Bernard Edwards share most of the writing credits with Debbie in a format that superficially departs little



Debbie Harry comes out of the Blondie closet on *KooKoo.*

from the norm. Yet, when taken in the context of the production influence of the Rodgers-Edwards team and Bill Scheniman's careful engineering, the subtle direction changes and image promotion emerge.

Backfired was an obvious single choice but the lavish musicianship of Chrome and the finality of Oasis stamp the work with a mood which can only be linked to the Harry talent.

•

It's easy for a lot of fine things to get buried in Hollywood, but where have they been stashing Kim Carnes? If you've heard the single and you think Bette Davis Eyes should have got the wind-up a long time ago, then let me tell you that you've not heard the best of Ms Carnes until you have fastened your little ear to the album, *Mistaken Identity* (EMI America). Judging by the wear and tear she could be old enough to have been at the same glass gargling party which cost Rod Stewart terminal laryngitis, but seeing they're from opposite sides of the ocean, it's hardly likely. Still, it's no fluke she wraps the chords around Frankie Miller's (another gravel voice) When I'm Away From You.

Bette Davis Eyes and Hit and Run were written by Donna Weiss and Jackie De Shannon, the latter being one of the best female singer-songwriters of the '60s who, among other hits, wrote Needles and Pins — a hit for the Searchers. Ms Carnes co-wrote the title cut and a few other tunes, including the rockin' Break The Rules Tonight, on which she's joined by co-writers Dave Ellingson and prominent session vocalist Wendy Waldman in the chorus.

By way of diversity, Still Hold On is structured, particularly in use of backing vocals, to give it a semi-gospel feel that puts Kim's voice dead in the middle of the Bible belt, until Jerry Petersen's sax comes wheeling in to turn it around again. The strength in this album rests not merely with the voice and the way in which Kim Carnes uses it, but with a judicious selection of songs, wonderfully executed under the band leadership of Bill Cuomo and the production and recording skill of Val Garay. But let's not underestimate the considerable talent of Kim Carnes — she's a fantastic singer and also a damn fine and talented songwriter.

•

Australian Crawl have set themselves a tough one to follow with the eminently successful *Boys Light Up.* One or two music reviewers jumped in early to say *Sirocco* (EMI) fell short of the standard, but they are now all doing a real backscramble to change their stances. Perhaps everybody anticipated such a mammoth project and glossy packing to batter down the doors of those who remain unconvinced, but Aussie Crawl have stuck to their low-key guns, opting for softer options rather than a mad urge to cash in on their unexpected fame.

Whereas *Boys Light Up* copped a bit of stick for a David Briggs' production job, which gave it a strong Little-River-Band-like feel, *Sirocco* takes an immediate swerve under the production of Peter Dawkins. The album title stems from the James Reyne and Guy McDonough tune, Errol, in which the legendary Errol Flynn's boat, Sirocco, gets a fair-sized mention.

Sirocco's failing is that it doesn't have a single cut as smart as *Boys Light Up,* but there is compensation in the balance offered by having all band members, plus pals Kerry Armstrong and Sean Higgins, involved in writing the material. Consequently, *Sirocco* has more substance but less pazzazz than the debut work, but wins out for sheer durability.

•

In the tradition of music's grand romantics, Jim Steinman (like Wagner) has a tendency for overkill. *On Bad For Good* (Epic), the creator of Meatloaf's *Bat Out Of Hell* project takes up exactly where he left off with an over-embroidered rug which just might be rock and roll's answer to Gilbert and Sullivan.

Steinman's images open the tomb, expose the moon, reveal the true color of blood and probably give fathers good reason to lock up their daughters. It's real forked-tongue seduction stuff, but nobody can deny that it's brilliantly performed. Roy Bittan (piano) and Max Weinberg (drums) have been recruited from Springsteen's E Street Band. Todd Rundgren plays all lead electric guitars, Rory Dodd, Karla de Vito, Ellen Foley and Kasim Sultan help out on vocals — and that accounts for only half of the backing.

— NEIL JAMESON

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'If the chemistry is right'

ROSS WILSON wants to, but can't, escape the fact that too many people see him as an Australian rock 'n' roll figurehead. Ten years of carving around with the near-legendary Daddy Cool, Mighty Kong, the first Mondo Rock, and producing for Skyhooks and Jo Jo Zep and the Falcons, do offer strong qualifications. But there is more to it than that. There is something gratifying about watching Ross Wilson and the new Mondo Rock reap the reward of three hot singles and a slick album, yet still maintain a solid sense of perspective of what rock 'n' roll is and where it all started.

It is his sense of history, plus his articulate style as a singer-songwriter, which has made the positive reaction to the *Chemistry* album that much more interesting. It means Ross "The Boss" has slipped his past enough for Mondo Rock to (finally) establish its own identity. Wilson, the frontman, is still the boy the rock scribes tap for the interview, but he says: "It's getting easier to shovel it off on to the other guys."

That Mondo's chart run and national tour demand has improved Ross Wilson's stature with old and new fans goes almost without saying. PLAYBOY thought it strong enough to trouble him for a few words, and came out of the rap with the observation that a little bit of retrospection can still keep you forever young.

PLAYBOY: What's the most important aspect of what you're doing now?

WILSON: The fact that we're doing it on our own terms. It was a gamble getting the band together, and to make it work involved a lot of luck and good timing, plus the fact that a great songwriter in Eric McCusker surfaced.

PLAYBOY: In view of that gamble, the title seems apt.

WILSON: It's from Eric's song, of course. As much as being about one-to-one relationships, I'm sure he wrote it with the band situation in mind. Eric had an idea of calling the album *Moves*, after another song, but I thought *Chemistry* seemed more interesting and conjured all sorts of images.

PLAYBOY: State of the Heart was Eric's first big song with the band. What was your reaction when you saw how well it was received?

WILSON: We thought it was a fresh song and liked its mood. I especially loved the way I got into the lyrics.

PLAYBOY: You're very lucky to possess a clarity of voice enjoyed by few others. Does that aid interpretation of other people's songs?

WILSON: It's down to pronunciation. If you're going to sing a song, you might as well let people know what it's about. That came out of the pre-Daddy Cool days, when I was singing with my group, the Party Machine. We did about 80 percent original material. People wouldn't tolerate stuff they didn't know, so I thought if I could sell a smart or funny lyric, they might get into it. That's why I tried to pronounce everything clearly.

PLAYBOY: Are you influenced by other people's music?

WILSON: I'm still listening to material I've listened to for 15 or 20 years. Like John Lee Hooker. I can listen to his material day and night, and never get sick of it. If you put him in the context of the time when he first appeared, he was incredibly radical. I also dig a lot of modern soul music.

PLAYBOY: It doesn't show.

WILSON: Well, I went exploring the roots of rock with Daddy Cool and I thought: "I'd love to play some of that old shit and maybe learn a few things on the way." Ultimately, you come back to the conclusion that black music is great because, rhythmically, it's there. Then I say: "But I'm not black, and I don't sound like that." I believe it's to do with DNA structure, genes and maybe environment. Wherever you have been dumped on this planet, geneology and ancestry must come through.

PLAYBOY: Where did the Ross Wilson rock 'n' roll odyssey start?

WILSON: I've lived in Melbourne all my life and grew up in Hampton, which is down on the bay. Now I live in Sandringham, which is like the mother town to Hampton. My dad is a jazz buff, and my mum was into classical music. When I was about age 10, a few things clicked into place. One was an incredible liking for rock 'n' roll, particularly black stuff. There was a lot of wishy-washy white stuff around, and by the time it reached here in the mid-'50s, it was really watered down, but some good things still got through. I can remember my old man taking me to Festival Hall for my first rock show when I was about 10. It started with Johnny O'Keefe — that's when he was really wild — then progressed through Buddy Holly and the Crickets and Jerry Lee Lewis. Eddy Cochrane was supposed to have been on, too, but he'd just got killed. Paul Anka was on, but I really didn't like him. I can remember seeing the Jazz Crusaders on TV, and I saw Lightnin' Hopkins. I couldn't believe him. He was really primitive, and I turned to my mother and said: "What's that?" And she answered: "Twelve-bar blues," but I thought she had said "crow-bar", so I went around for the next few years with this crow-bar blues thing in mind.

PLAYBOY: How was that important to you?

WILSON: In the early '60s, the trad jazz revival started, and it was then I realised that all the blues and jazz were basically the same. And what people like Little Richard were playing — rock 'n' roll — was the same.

PLAYBOY: So that made you a rock 'n' roller?

WILSON: Not quite. The other big turning point in my life happened when I was run over. I was 16 and spent the entire summer holidays in hospital with my leg in traction. The Beatles had just happened, and the Stones and Manfred Mann were just breaking. I was digging all this on the headphones and liked the amount of harmonica they used. While I was recuperating at home, I bought several harmonicas and learned some tunes. The local beat boom had struck our suburb, and I went down to see some local guys playing and had a blow with them. They went wild for no one was doing harmonica. Then this little guy came up and asked if I'd like to join his group. This was Ross Hannaford, and a few years later, we found ourselves in Daddy Cool together. Two years after getting out of hospital, I got called up for national service, but failed the medical on account of the broken leg. I got some cash as a result of the accident, which enabled me go overseas and broaden my musical horizons.

PLAYBOY: All on the account of being run over?

WILSON: That's fate, eh?

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MOVIES

from atlantic city to the darkest jungle, a certain wonder-lust runs rampant

Like his *Pretty Baby*, French director Louis Malle's **Atlantic City** gives the curious sensation of an American film with a slight but charming foreign accent. The effect is fresh because Malle seems to look at everything as if for the first time, and finds both innocence and enchantment in all of it — the Boardwalk, the fast food shops, the junky rooming houses giving way to new resort hotels, even the Mafia hoodlums whose search after some stolen cocaine keeps everyone in the movie on the move. Although it's only a throw-away joke, one of the most telling bits of local color to brighten up any movie this year is a scene set in the Frank Sinatra wing of a large Atlantic City hospital, where Robert Goulet and a fine-feathered chorus line are doing a song-and-dance routine in the lobby. With cameras rolling and robed patients standing by. Probably a dedication ceremony. No one says why. Perhaps because no one knows.

Most of *Atlantic City* is similarly eccentric, and gets more so as it goes along, never doing quite what you expect. One winning number is Susan Sarandon, who usually finds herself in movies considerably smaller than her talent, here playing a girl who slings shellfish to put herself through croupier school because she wants to improve herself. Opposite her, Burt Lancaster gives his best performance in years as a small-potatoes numbers runner who plays nursemaid to a faded boardwalk beauty (Kate Reid) and who waxes poetic about the good old days: "It used to be beautiful . . . with rackets, whoring, guns." This bizarre senior citizen finally manages to turn back the clock, in a sense, by making love to a young woman and getting in some gun-play of a more violent nature. Playwright John Guare's rather

Susan Sarandon and Burt Lancaster in *Atlantic City*.

trenchant dialogue and the story are a good part of the reason for *Atlantic City's* success as a fairly amoral comedy of crime-and-to-hell-with-punishment. It's rather weird but at long last irresistible. If upward mobility is the name of the game, the weathered old Jersey resort taking a new lease on life is a perfect symbol.

•

Surprisingly, after all the brouhaha abut censorship, there is a genial air of innocence about John Derek's **Tarzan, the Ape Man**. The final — and maybe the best — scene has Bo Derek, as Jane, gamboling around the jungle with her new Tarzan (Miles O'Keefe, prime beefcake but speaking nary a word throughout) and an orang-utan, all three behaving like exuberant puppies. I suspect that old Edgar Rice Burroughs himself might okay that sequence, though he'd also think his Tarzan hero was generally given short shrift while the camera settles down to study beauteous Bo. The Derek *Tarzan* works as a kind of *Blue Lagoon* for grownups, with some stilted dramatics, too much slow motion in the action sequences but lots of glorious wildlife, and other natural wonders to compensate. Derek is no storyteller, but he is certainly a creator of myths, and the myth known as Bo Derek is all here, resplendent as she was in our September pictorial. Her leading man has loincloth, will travel, but doesn't stand a chance against the chimps, snakes and scenery.

— BRUCE WILLIAMSON

"Aba-dabba-dabba," says the monkey to the chick.

•

Credibility missed a starring role in the *Rocky* sagas, and it doesn't rate too highly on director John Huston's priority list for **Escape to Victory**. Escape and escapism are the cause and effect in this World War Two concentration camp drama with a soccer match between Allied prisoners and the German national team figuring as an unlikely but spectacular "wooden horse". The best parts go to Michael Caine, as Captain Colby, a former England international player, and Max von Sydow, as a soccer-crazed German propaganda officer. Sylvester Stallone is the obligatory American hero, and amid scenes tailored for *Rocky*-style audiences, he wins the ultimate shoot-out.

For the soccer sequences, Huston shot for the stars with a Who's Who of internationals, including Pele, Bobby Moore, Kazi Deyna (Poland), Ossie Ardiels (Argentina), John Wark (Scotland) and his Ipswich Town teammate, Russell Osman.

Action is in ample supply, but Huston's cameras and a tight script divert occasionally to explore the comparison between the game and the war, and the social differences between the working class soccer lads and their foppish British officers. As the idealistic von Steiner (von Sydow) speculates: "If nations could settle their differences on the football field . . . " Hardly heady, but thrills to the final whistle. — A.D. AIRD

•

As animated features go, Ralph Bakshi's ambitious **American Pop** occasionally looks and sounds like *The Godfather* set to music. He tells a straightforward story about four generations of a Russian-Jewish immigrant family living the American dream. Bakshi has interwoven it with a powerhouse score adapted by Lee Holdridge which explores every American musical style from jazz and ragtime to hard rock. There is no reason whatever for this tale to be told through animation instead of by live actors, and I'm sure that's precisely why Bakshi did it: to prove he *can* push the limits of animation so far beyond Disney that we can never go back to cunning raccoons and twittering bluebirds.

— BRUCE WILLIAMSON

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Cover: Sweater from GQ, Shoes from Raymond Castles, TV set from National.
Living Doll (Pages 84-97): T-shirt by Sportsgirl, bikini by Brian Rochford, coffee table by Bryvord Design, vase by Saywell Imports, silk pyjamas by Richards, cushions by Patchwork Products.

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PLAYMATE REVIEW

IT'S THE FESTIVE SEASON AGAIN — AND WE'VE GOT ANOTHER BUMPER CHRISTMAS LINE-UP, INCLUDING:

PLAYMATE REVIEW — THIS IS ISSUE No. 36, AND TO MARK THE END OF OUR THIRD YEAR IN AUSTRALIA, WE TAKE A NOSTALGIC LOOK AT A FEW OF THE LADIES WHO HAVE GRACED THE CENTRE PAGES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS

MANILA AFTER DARK — WHY ARE MORE AND MORE AUSTRALIAN MEN VISITING THE PHILIPPINES? THE ANSWER IS SEX, SEX, SEX, WITH THE BONUS OF BEAUTIFUL, ENGLISH-SPEAKING WOMEN. WE TAKE YOU BEHIND THE SCENES IN THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE LOOK YET AT THE CITY WHICH IS FAST BECOMING ASIA'S SEX CAPITAL

BOOMTOWN BLUES — WHAT'S LIFE REALLY LIKE ON THE FRONTIER OF THE RESOURCES BOOM? HOW DO MEN REACT TO THE PRESSURE WHEN THEY OUTNUMBER AVAILABLE WOMEN TEN TO ONE? AND WHAT ARE THEIR OUTLETS? **JOHN FLACK** ANALYSES BURGEONING GLADSTONE AND COMES UP WITH SOME SURPRISING RESULTS

WAR OF THE WORLDS — BUT WITH A DIFFERENCE — IT'S THE McMUNCHIES AGAINST THE PIZZA FORTS AND THE FLORIDA FRIEDS IN THE WACKIEST WAR OF THEM ALL. PLAYBOY IS PROUD TO PRESENT ANOTHER BRIGHT NEW TALENT IN SYDNEY WRITER **MICHAEL COLMAN,** WHO SATIRISES THE GROWTH OF TAKE-AWAY FOOD CHAINS IN HIS HUMOROUS SHORT STORY, *WAR WITH THE WORKS*

DEATH IN THE DARK — MOUNT GAMBIER, SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S SECOND CITY, SITS ON A GIGANTIC WATER-FILLED SWISS CHEESE WHERE MORE THAN A DOZEN DIVERS HAVE MET THEIR DEATHS IN THE ICY BLACKNESS. **PAUL MANN** GOES BELOW AND EXPERIENCES NARCOSIS OF THE DEEP IN THE HOLE WHERE EIGHT YOUNG SYDNEY DIVERS DROWNED IN 1972

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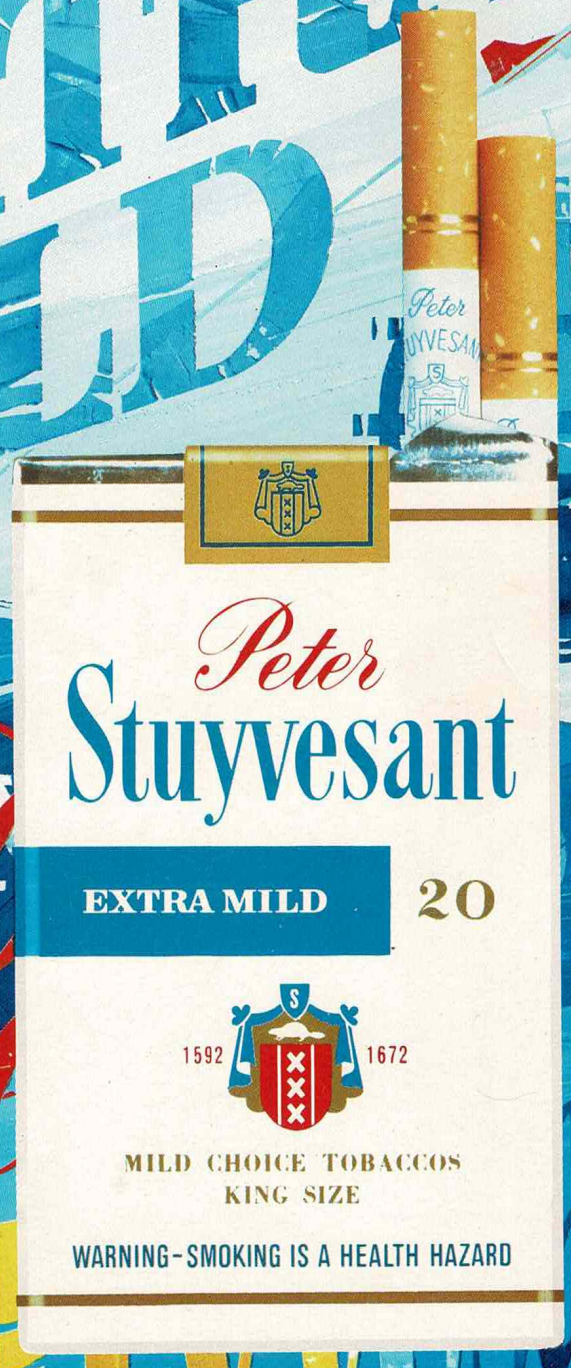

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